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OPINION METER
This week's poll:

On a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being the lowest and 5 the highest, what's your level of optimism that you will get your rebate for the 2011 tax year?

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Afghan-led forces beat back a brazen Taliban attack on the Afghan capital. ➤ PAGE 15

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The SRT Viper is Chrysler's roar, a comeback car for a comeback company. ➤ PAGE 18

LIFE & STYLE

A memorial trip marks 100 years since the Titanic sent more than 1,500 people to a watery grave. ➤ PAGE 19

Senators battle over panel report to reject Sixto. PAGE 3
Fitial gets 1st update in probe vs Mafnas. PAGE 5

Fire razes 2 houses, engulfs another

FERDIE DE LA TORRE
A firefighter sprays water onto one of the three houses that was burned yesterday afternoon in San Jose.

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

A fire of still unknown cause razed to the ground yesterday afternoon two houses and engulfed the interior of an adjacent house, all located along Ellegh Avenue in San Jose, Saipan.

No one was reported injured as most residents were either at work or in school when the fire broke out past 1pm, *Saipan Tribune* learned from witnesses.

A total of five families were affected, including two families that occupy two duplex-type units that sustained water and smoke damage.

Firefighters prevented the blaze from

See FIRE on Page 4

Senate OKs withdrawal of up to 50 percent of Fund contribution

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

» 'Compromise' version of HB 17-226 also up for House voting today

Non-retired members of the NMI Retirement Fund are a step closer to getting their money back, albeit only up to 50 percent—and not 100 percent as originally intended—of their defined benefit plan contributions without penalty under a "compromise" version of the controversial House Bill 17-226 that the Senate passed last night by a vote of 6-2.

The rest of the contributions will be rolled over to the

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Kilili 'politicizing' CIP money issue, says admin

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

RELATED NEWS
➤ Manglona says Fitial is the 'desperate one' PAGE 5

The Fitial administration harshly criticized Delegate Gregorio Kilili Sablan (Ind-MP) yesterday for "politicizing" the issue of unspent capital improvement project funding.

Fitial, in a statement yesterday, said the administration and the CIP Office are "working vigorously to maximize the use of available capital improvement funds."

See KILILI on Page 4

GRAND OPENING

CLARISSA V. DAVID

RE/MAX Paradise Realty owner and broker Joe Ayuyu, third left, and wife Marcia Ayuyu, second right, are joined by government officials and RE/MAX Guam representatives in cutting the ceremonial ribbon that marked the grand opening of the local franchise of the leading real estate company in the U.S. and around the world yesterday. From left, associate broker Elizabeth C. Duenas, managing director for international development Leonard P. Campos, Gov. Benigno R. Fitial, and Saipan Mayor Donald G. Flores.

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Miah's 2 alleged conspirators arrested

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

Federal agents arrested last week two alleged conspirators of Mohammad Jahangir Miah in a scheme of cashing fraudulent CNMI tax refund checks at grocery stores.

Earl Eric Mirano, also known by the aliases Eric C. Mirano and Earl Cruz Mirano, was arrested Wednesday, while Cecilia Blas was apprehended on Friday.

Mirano and Blas were served with an arrest warrant after an indictment was filed in the U.S. Dis-

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Local

RE/MAX franchise opens on Saipan

Marcia Ayuyu, right, of the newly opened RE/MAX Paradise Realty on Saipan poses with RE/MAX Guam representatives (left to right) Leonard P. Campos, managing director for international development; Gina Campos, associate broker and certified residential specialist; Elizabeth C. Duenas, associate broker; and John P. Duenas, Micronesia partner.
CLARISSA V. DAVID

By CLARISSA V. DAVID
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REPORTER

Government officials and business leaders witnessed yesterday the grand opening of RE/MAX Paradise Realty, the local franchise of the leading real estate company in the U.S. and throughout the world.

RE/MAX Paradise Realty owner and now real estate broker Joe Ayuyu, along with wife Marcia and daughter and office manager Mable Ayuyu, said their new venture marks the revival of the islands' real estate industry.

RE/MAX was founded in 1973 in Denver, Colorado by owners Dave and Gail Liniger. Four decades later, RE/MAX has expanded into a global network composed of over 100,000 agents in more than 80 countries in Central and South America, Canada, Asia, Australia, Europe, and Africa.

RE/MAX, which stands for Real Estate Maximum, is also expanding its reach to the Pacific region, having offices in Guam, the CNMI, and soon in Palau and the Philippines, according to Joe Ayuyu.

Joe Ayuyu, in his remarks, said that he has a propensity of being associated with leading brand names. Twenty years ago, he bought the franchise for fastfood chain McDonald's and now, he has acquired the No. 1 brand name in the real estate industry.

"I'm very pleased and happy to be associated with RE/MAX, which is considered the number one real estate company in the U.S. and around the world. Its far-reaching network is what makes it unique," Joe Ayuyu told his audience.

Joe Ayuyu noted that starting up a real estate business comes with challenges, which he'd overcome with the training he received from RE/MAX University and with the assistance of the RE/MAX Guam office, which sent representatives to yesterday's event. They were Leonard P. Campos, managing director for international development; Gina Campos, associate broker and certified residential specialist; John P. Duenas, DC Micronesia partner; and Elizabeth C. Duenas, associate broker.

Joe Ayuyu introduced to the audience four of his five real estate agents, who will be dealing with clients of RE/MAX Paradise Realty. They are Juan I. Tenorio, Geralyn Dela Cruz, Diego Benavente, and Ramon Dela Cruz. Vicente Sablan was unable to make it to the ceremony.

"You can look forward to a professional group of people that will assist the community in selling, buying, and managing their properties, bringing a higher level of standard as far as real estate is concerned," added Ayuyu.

Gov. Benigno R. Fitial thanked the Ayuyus for their "countless contributions" in the community.

"Despite our current challenges, they pushed forward with this new venture because they see how much potential lies ahead," said Fitial, adding that the community will now have the chance to meet their real estate needs "with the most trusted name in the business."

"Joe and Marcia have done a tremendous and fantastic job running McDonald's and I believe that they will do the same with RE/MAX," said Mayor Donald G. Flores.

Department of Commerce's Ivan Blanco, who represented secretary Sixto Igisomar, said the opening of RE/MAX translates to jobs and "locally-made dollars" for the CNMI economy.

Commonwealth Development Authority executive director Manuel Sablan described Joe Ayuyu as a "visionary" who can be emulated by the rest of the community.

"He started something that nobody has done before: acquiring and promoting the largest U.S. franchise in the real estate business…He is a local who sees an opportunity despite what everybody is saying about the economy," added Sablan.

Fr. Ike Ayuyu led the blessing of the new office located at the RJ Plaza Building in Dandan. Guests were served light refreshments after the ceremonial ribbon cutting.

Tinian awaits visit of expedition ship

By CLARISSA V. DAVID
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REPORTER

The Tinian Mayor's Office is gearing up for the anticipated arrival of MS *Hanseatic*, a five-star expedition ship scheduled to visit Tinian on April 27.

Dela Cruz

Operated by German cruise operator Hapag-Lloyd Cruises, MS *Hanseatic* is expected to bring in "well-traveled, sophisticated guests interested in life-long learning" from Germany, Austria, and Switzerland.

PDI will serve as the ship's land agent while Saipan Shipping is the shipping agent.

"We are most excited about this opportunity to greet and entertain guests from so far away," said Tinian and Aguiguan Mayor Ramon M. Dela Cruz in a letter to PDI director Gordon Marciano.

In line with the visit, Dela Cruz wants to bring the ship's passengers ashore at Kammer Beach, which the mayor described as "an excellent small boat landing site."

Dela Cruz also instructed Tinian Fiesta 2012 committee chair Joe Dela Cruz to issue fiesta booth permits and Tinian Commerce resident director Jose Kiyoshi to issue fiesta vendor licenses to allow local vendors to set up shop in time for MS *Hanseatic*'s arrival.

"It will be a fiesta setting for the guests to experience," Marciano told *Saipan Tribune*, adding that MS *Hanseatic* is looking forward to visit Tinian once again and include the island in its maiden voyage for 2012.

The mayor also wants to invite the ship's purser to purchase local fruits and vegetables such as papaya, watermelon, cherry tomatoes, and green beans for use aboard the ship.

Dela Cruz noted that MS *Hanseatic* passengers can also avail of a historical tour of Tinian to be conducted by Deborah Fleming and Don Farrell.

As an expedition cruise, MS *Hanseatic* aims to show guests remote areas in the world that are worth seeing. Being a small ship, its specialty is "to anchor in places that other ships cannot reach."

Passengers of MS *Hanseatic* were informed that Tinian is "one of the larger islands" of the Northern Mariana Islands which are "a few kilometers west of the Mariana Trench" and boasts of "white sand beaches, dense jungle, and turquoise blue waters."

Tourism Tuesday

A weekly update from the Marianas Visitors Authority
Tourism is everybody's business.

Tradeshows in Chubu, Japan

In March 2012, the **Marianas Visitors Authority (MVA)** participated in two major trade shows in the Chubu region of Japan.

The **Nagoya Tabi Matsuri 2012**, one of the largest travel consumer shows in the region, was held at **Nagoya Hisaya Odori Park** on March 17-18, 2012. In addition to having an information booth, the MVA staged five **Saipan-da!** shows on the event main stage, all with the goal of promote Saipan and the Northern Marianas as the best and closest beach destination to the Chubu region. Over 110 domestic and overseas tourist offices and airlines participated in this year's event.

On March 29, the 17th **Chubu Wholesaler Workshop** was held at Wing Aichi, with nine national tourism offices and 14 major wholesalers in the Nagoya area participating in the event. The Northern Marianas distributed brochures and responded to inquiries as its event booth. Over 15 organizations participated in the workshop.

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Senate members battle over EAGI panel report to reject Sixto

» Reyes points to string of rejections for Carolinian appointees

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

Senators battled for hours yesterday over a Senate Committee on Executive Appointments and Government Investigation report recommending rejection of Sixto K. Igisomar's reappointment to the NMI Retirement Fund board, even as the Senate confirmed by an 8-0 vote the re-appointment of Elaine Orilla to the Northern Marianas College's Board of Regents.

Igisomar personally asked senators during yesterday's session to act "favorably" on his re-appointment so that he could assist the Fund in dealing with lots of pressing issues, including a threat of receivership if no amicable plan is presented to the court by June 15.

After a heated debate on the proposed rejection of Igisomar's re-appointment, the Senate decided to defer action on the EAGI committee's two-page report last night.

Senate floor leader Pete Reyes (R-Saipan) raised concern over what he described as a string of rejections of Carolinian appointees to different boards and commissions.

Igisomar is a Carolinian, and so were at least two other nominees whose re-appointments were rejected by the Senate. They were former Marianas Public Land Trust trustee Gregoria Fitial-Omar, the governor's younger sister, and Viola Alepuyo, a former chair of the Commonwealth Public Utilities Commission.

Sen. Frank Cruz (R-Tinian) belied Reyes' insinuation. Cruz, who engaged in a heated debate with Reyes, said the committee looked into performance of fiduciary duty and responsibilities, not race or ethnicity.

"We are not rejecting [him] because he's Carolinian. It's [based on] the facts my committee has gathered," he said.

Of the five EAGI Committee members, only three signed the recommendation to reject Igisomar: chairman Cruz, vice chair Sen. Juan Ayuyu (Ind-Rota), and member Senate Vice President Jude Hofschneider (R-Tinian).

Reyes wrote the word "no" in capital letters instead of signing the report, while Sen. Jovita Taimanao (Ind-Rota) wasn't able to sign it.

Taimanao asked Cruz for an more time for all senators to review the committee's findings, while Ayuyu offered a motion to defer action on the report until further review.

Rep. Ray Tebuteb (R-Saipan) also asked senators to confirm Igisomar so that Carolinians could also be represented on the Fund board.

"Sixto is one individual I can trust to represent Carolinian people," he said.

Only Sen. Henry San Nicolas (Cov-Tinian) was absent yesterday.

Findings and recommendations

Gov. Benigno R. Fitial re-appointed Igisomar to the Fund board on Jan. 30, but the Senate deferred acting on his nomination at least twice because the EAGI panel was either not ready with its report or because other senators asked for further review of the report itself.

Igisomar is the current secretary of the Department of Commerce.

The EAGI report said Igisomar is "overloaded with the two time-consuming positions, as it is understandably difficult to oversee a principle (sic) government agency and the assets of a depleting pension plan."

Igisomar

Cruz's committee also said that as chairman of the Fund board, Igisomar "failed to take action on the breach of contract of the Retirement Fund's computer software system against the contractor."

The EAGI panel was referring to businessman Gary Sword and his Express Electronics. The Fund only recently filed a lawsuit against Sword and Express Electronics for their alleged defective pension software that has already cost the Fund $406,060.

Cruz's committee was also "disappointed" with Igisomar's submission of documents detailing the exorbitant costs for legal fees associated with the Fund.

"The committee finds it very disturbing that Mr. Igisomar did not monitor such expensive legal fees, a prudent practice that a trustee must have during these economic times. Furthermore, a trustee's fiduciary role should focus on the management of investment decisions, which should be made solely in the interest of the participants and beneficiaries," the panel said.

The EAGI Committee therefore recommends that the full Senate "not confirm" Igisomar to serve a second term on the Fund board.

Reyes also questioned the timing of the proposed rejection of Igisomar's re-appointment, considering that nobody previously questioned Igisomar's capability to hold two positions for months and years.

Reyes said that Igisomar's dedication to help the Fund is admirable. He said the Senate should not punish Igisomar for his ability to multi-task.

"It's depressing and sinful. I'm ashamed as a member of the Senate that Carolinians are rejected. But I am more ashamed that a qualified Carolinian [is being rejected]," he said, adding that Igisomar has institutional knowledge that is beneficial to the Fund, retirees, and the CNMI.

During the session, Igisomar tried to respond to Cruz's questions, but there were times when he was shot down.

Reyes later told reporters that Cruz is sticking to his "own facts" instead of listening to the facts directly from Igisomar.

In March, Reyes accused the panel of singling out nominees from Saipan when it comes to rejecting Fitial's appointments and re-appointments. Prior to that, the Senate also rejected former MPLT chair Alvaro Santos' re-appointment mainly because of a private land purchase.

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2 nabbed for domestic violence

Police arrested over the weekend on Saipan two men in connection with separate domestic violence cases.

Kwi Dong Woo, 54, and Carlos A. Ramangmou, 22, were taken to the Superior Court yesterday morning for bail hearings.

Woo was arrested for assault with a dangerous weapon, assault and battery, criminal mischief, and disturbing the peace. Ramangmou was apprehended for assault and battery and disturbing the peace.

Associate Judge Kenneth L. Govendo imposed a $6,500 cash bail for Woo and $500 cash bail for Ramangmou.

Police detective Melissa Bauleong stated in her report that Woo and his former wife had an argument Thursday at her residence in Garapan.

Woo allegedly choked the victim and threw a plastic chair at her. The victim was not hit, but the chair shattered a glass window.

The victim took their two minor children and ran to call the police.

In the case against Ramangmou, police detective JB Cepeda stated in his report that the defendant slapped the face of his common-law wife during an argument at their house in Susupe on Friday.

The victim threw a piece of sausage at the defendant's face and ran to his parents' room to tell them to call the police. ***(Ferdie de la Torre)***

SENATE

From Page 1

defined contribution plan.

The original HB 17-226 allowed for withdrawal of up to 100 percent of members' contributions to the DB plan, which the Senate opposed and instead offered just a rollover to the DC plan and a hardship loan.

HB 17-226's latest version retains the provision that non-retired Fund members could refund their contributions by withdrawal and/or rollover and still continue their government job, as well as move from the DB plan to the DC plan.

The House is poised to also act on the compromise version of H.B. 17-226 in today's session.

If the House passes the bill, it will be on its way to the governor for action.

Amounts withdrawn shall be paid within 180 days following the date on which the member is eligible to receive a refund of the members' contributions, the latest version of the bill states.

Speaker Eli Cabrera's (R-Saipan) bill has been bouncing between the two chambers for almost seven months until a conference committee was formed to work on a so-called "compromise" bill. The result was HB 17-226, House Draft 1, Senate Substitute 1, Senate Draft 2, Conference Committee Substitute 1.

Six of the eight senators present during yesterday's session voted "yes" to the compromise bill, two voted "no," and one was absent.

The two who voted against it were Senate floor leader Pete Reyes (R-Saipan) and Sen. Luis Crisostimo (Ind-Saipan). Sen. Henry San Nicolas (Cov-Tinian) was absent.

Those who voted for the bill's passage were Senate President Paul Manglona (Ind-Rota), Senate Vice President Jude Hofschneider (R-Tinian), and Sens. Juan Ayuyu (Ind-Rota), Frank Cruz (R-Tinian), Jovita Taimanao (Ind-Rota), and Ralph Torres (R-Saipan).

Torres, in an interview last night, said the compromise bill is "good for all current government employees."

"They now have the option to withdraw up to 50 percent of their contributions from the DB plan and roll over the rest to the DC plan. It also extends the option for early retirement for three years," Torres told *Saipan Tribune.*

House floor leader George Camacho (Ind-Saipan) said yesterday he will vote "yes" on the bill today, adding that the leadership is "most likely" to vote for it.

Rep. Fred Deleon Guerrero (Ind-Saipan) also said he will vote "yes" on the latest version of HB 17-226.

"It is the right thing to do returning the people's money. [Up to] 50 percent they would be allowed to take out and 50 percent transfer to the 401K retirement plan. I believe this is one of the more needed bills to assist the people of the Commonwealth," he said.

Rep. Ray Tebuteb (R-Saipan), for his part, said there's "no clear financial analysis."

Early retirement

The compromise bill also extends the early retirement period provision of Public Law 15-70 by an additional three years.

The supposed five-year transition period under PL 17-50 will end on June 13, 2012.

Under the joint House-Senate version of HB 17-226, that period will be extended up to June 13, 2015, "to give active members more time to pay their lump sum contribution to the Retirement Fund."

The six-member Conference Committee on HB 17-226 are co-chaired by House Vice Speaker Felicidad Ogumoro (Cov-Saipan) and Senate Fiscal Affairs chair Sen. Jovita Taimanao (Ind-Rota). The members are House floor leader George Camacho (Ind-Saipan), Rep. Teresita Santos (Ind-Rota), Sen. Frank Cruz (R-Tinian), and Sen. Ralph Torres (R-Saipan).

In their five-page report, the conferees said they met several times and heard from the Retirement Fund, the ASC Trust Corp., Joe Pangelinan, and other active Fund members.

The conference committee stated that the enactment of the bill "will lessen the government's financial liabilities as it authorizes qualified government employees to withdraw their contributions from the Retirement Fund, thus decreasing the government's financial obligations to the pension fund."

"The potential adverse effect of this measure, however, is that it lessens the NMI Retirement Fund's lifespan, which will create an immediate financial obligation of the Commonwealth government retirees' pensions," the report said.

KILILI

From Page 1

"Unfortunately, this is an election year and some re-electionists will make every attempt to politicize the work of many hardworking government employees. And while some elected leaders constantly degrade the good work of public servants based on false information, I encourage all government employees to continue the hard work you do everyday for the benefit of the entire Commonwealth," Fitial said.

Sablan earlier told *Saipan Tribune* that the CNMI has $54 million in projected unspent CIP money by the end of September and some $11 million in unspent Federal Highway Administration funds that could have been circulating in the local economy and creating more badly needed jobs.

The administration said every single capital improvement project "is either undergoing environmental review, design, construction, or is being de-obligated and redirected to new priorities."

It said there are more CIPs underway "than at any time in the history of the Commonwealth."

The administration said this includes reconstruction of a Rota gymnasium, purchase of medical equipment for Tinian, repairs to the Tinian Harbor, renovation of classrooms at Northern Marianas College, and repair of government buildings.

"Due to the costs of some projects such as the Tinian landfill, the Rota landfill, and the Puerto Rico dump closure project, large amounts of funds must be retained for the final stage of construction, which are in excess of $5 million to $10 million each. Thus, these funds may seem like they are sitting idle, but they are merely for the design and permitting stages to be completed, so construction can be implemented," the administration said.

CIP grant money provides funding to a lot of infrastructure needs in the CNMI, including critical needs such as in the areas of education, power, water, wastewater and solid waste programs and services.

The CNMI's slow spending of CIP money has been believed to be a major factor in the CNMI's receipt of a steadily declining amount of CIP funding for years.

In fiscal year 2005, the CNMI's CIP funding was $12.5 million. Five years later or in fiscal year 2010, it was $11 million, before going down to $10 million in fiscal year 2011 and $9.5 million in fiscal year 2012.

For fiscal year 2013, the proposed CIP money for the CNMI is only $8.7 million.

Sablan said moving and spending $65 million in CIP and Federal Highway funds would generate "immediate" additional revenues circulating in the economy compared to pushing for legalizing casino gaming on Saipan.

Sablan said he is not opposed to Saipan casino gambling if it's properly planned and envisioned. He hopes that somebody will step up to the plate and ensure that should casinos are legalized on Saipan, each casino license holder should be required to bring in an additional 200,000 tourists—inclusive of the gamblers and their families and friends—every year as a condition of renewing their annual license the following year, along with ensuring they pay their taxes, they pay their workers and abide by all other laws and rules.

FIRE

From Page 1

spreading to other houses and to the adjacent Pentecostal Missionary Church of Christ. A portion of the church's kitchen was burned, witnesses said.

At least three women and a teenage girl were seen crying at the scene as they helplessly watched their houses and belongings reduced to ashes. Three families failed to salvage any of their belongings.

Fire Lt. Kevin Aldan told *Saipan Tribune* that no one was reported injured in the fire but that they want to make sure all affected families are accounted for. He said they brought the affected families to the American Red Cross, which set up a tent in the vicinity.

He said they were still investigating the cause of the fire.

Aldan said four fire trucks from the Department of Public Safety as well as other support units responded to the scene. Aldan said they sought backup from the Commonwealth Ports Authority, but its tank was down and therefore couldn't assist them.

Some witnesses said that a DPS fire truck had no water when it arrived. Aldan disputed this, saying all the trucks had water but they did not immediately spray water into the fire because there were live wires on the ground.

Witnesses said the fire started inside a one-story house rented by Rowena Bagasala and her family.

Emma Nicholas, 62, said she was making her grandchildren sleep when their neighbor shouted, "Fire." When she went out of the house, Nicholas saw fire and smoke coming from the house of their neighbor—Bagasala and her family—so she immediately called 911.

Only Bagasala's 24-year-old son was at the house, but he was sleeping outside when the fire broke out. A neighbor had to wake him up to inform him of the blaze.

Bagasala's husband was at work while their two other daughters—6 and 14 years old—were at school at the time.

Bagasala, 46, said it was at about 2:30pm when she received a call from a neighbor that their house was on fire. She said she was working at the time at the house of her employer on Mt. Tapochao. Her employer dropped her off at the scene at 3pm.

Bagasala said their house was already totally burned when she arrived.

As the house was made of concrete and light materials, the blaze quickly spread to the adjacent house occupied by a certain Grace and her husband, who were both at their jobsites.

The two houses are reportedly owned by Diego Rabauliman and his sister.

The fire crawled to a dividing wall of a compound and burned the interior of a one-story house rented by Asuncion Demapan and her family.

Demapan and her husband were at work, while their two children were at school when the fire happened.

"I got only this bag that I carried to the office. Everything was burned," said the teary-eyed Demapan.

Firefighters and police officers prevented two other families that are renting nearby units from entering the compound as firefighters were still conducting clearing-up operations. The two houses only had smoke and water damage. The building where the three houses are located is owned by Micropac Saipan Inc., witnesses said.

On Thursday, an afternoon fire struck the Islander Club located behind Gold Beach Hotel on Pupulu Drive in Garapan. No one was reported injured in the blaze as the club was closed when the fire of unknown cause broke out.

Bush fires swept a big area and gobbled several banana plants at the former Botanical Garden in Papago last Tuesday and Wednesday.

MIAH

From Page 1

trict Court for the NMI last Tuesday, April 10.

The indictment charged Miah, Mirano, and Blas with conspiracy to commit bank fraud.

Mirano was taken to court Thursday afternoon; he pleaded not guilty. Court-appointed counsel Vicente Salas served as his lawyer.

Blas was brought to court Friday afternoon; she pleaded not guilty. Attorney Mark Hanson appeared as court-appointed counsel for her.

Blas is Miah's girlfriend, according to court papers.

U.S. District Court for the NMI Chief Judge Ramona V. Manglona released Mirano and Blas on a $5,000 unsecured bond.

Manglona set the jury trial for June 11, 2012.

FBI agents arrested Miah last March 19 after the U.S. government filed a criminal complaint charging him with conspiracy to commit bank fraud.

Miah at the time was on home confinement after being convicted in a driver's license scam at the Department of Public Safety's Bureau of Motor Vehicle.

The U.S. government last week moved to dismiss the complaint against Miah because of the filing of the indictment.

According to the indictment, Miah, Mirano, and Blas enriched themselves by fraudulently cashing stolen, "stale" tax refund checks in stores around Saipan. The tax refund checks were those had not been claimed within one year of the CNMI government's issuance.

Miah would buy a "stale" tax refund check from a co-conspirator who had stolen the check from the Department of Finance.

Miah and other persons would alter the text of the check, removing the name of the true payee and putting in its place a name of their own choosing, such as that of Mirano.

Mirano obtained a check in the amount of $189.83 from Miah. Although initially issued to "Yanqun Fang" on Dec. 19, 2002, the name "Earl Cruz Mirano" was inserted and the check was cleared for payment.

Mirano obtained another check in the amount of $639.63 from Miah. Although initially issued to "Hong Mei He" on Dec. 21, 2004, in the amount of $239.63, the name "Earl Cruz Mirano" was inserted and the check was cashed.

Miah would loan the car he used to his girlfriend, Blas, and send her with a fraudulent payee, such as Mirano, to a store that would cash the check from them.

Blas would collect the cash received in exchange for the check and take it back to Miah.

The defendants obtained a "stale" CNMI tax refund check in the amount of $446.22 issued to "Fen Deng."

The defendants, or one of their co-conspirators, altered the check so that it appeared to be made out to Mirano.

On Jan. 26, 2012, Mirano cashed the check at a store.

Manglona says Fitial is the 'desperate one'

Senate President Paul Manglona (Ind-Rota) said it's Gov. Benigno R. Fitial that is desperate, adding that the governor's statements are a lie.

He said he's surprised that Fitial dragged candidate Felix Santos's name when the latter has not even been elected to office.

Manglona is running with Felix Santos, who is vying for the lone House seat representing Rota, opposite his cousin, incumbent Rep. Teresita Santos (Ind-Rota), who is pairing with Victor Hocog with the full backing of the governor. Hocog is eyeing Manglona's seat.

Manglona and Fitial have been feuding publicly since the governor called Rota and Tinian senators "stupid" for rejecting a House bill legalizing casino gaming on Saipan.

The Senate president said the amended local bill giving funding to Rota patients would in fact remove politics from the selection of which patients would get funding because they would be selected by independent persons.

"That's why the delegation voted for it. It's the right thing to do, adding that the delegation is considering options to override or revive the legislation. I wish Representative Santos had not asked the governor to veto that bill. She was the only one absent during a delegation session on Rota when the bill was unanimously approved," he said.

Fitial on Friday reiterated that he has no qualms with making sure dialysis patients are taken cared of but he said he was forced to veto the bill because of the inclusion of a "dangerous" provision that would create another layer of bureaucracy.

"This provision aimed at politically picking which patients get funding is yet another concoction by the subsistence allowance expert. It is a pure shame that even for the well-being of dialysis patients, Senator Paul and his cohorts still look for ways to ensure that they can reap political benefits," Fitial said.

The governor expressed grave disappointment regarding what he described as Manglona's "latest attempt to engineer a family feud of sort by manipulating Felix Santos to run against his first cousin, incumbent Rep. Teresita Santos." ***(Saipan Tribune)***

Fitial gets 1st update in probe vs Mafnas

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
haidee_eugenio@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Gov. Benigno R. Fitial said he received yesterday morning a summary of Attorney General Ed Buckingham's first update on its investigation into complaints filed against Department of Public Safety Commissioner Ray Mafnas, who has been placed on administrative leave since March 26.

Fitial, however, said he "cannot reveal anything yet" because it's only the first update, and the investigation and reports are not completed yet.

"I still need to review the summary and then wait for the details to discuss," Fitial said in an interview at the ribbon-cutting of RE/MAX Paradise Realty in Dandan yesterday morning.

Once the investigation and report are complete, the administration will disclose the findings, he said.

"Of course. I can do it myself or ask the attorney general to talk to you," he added.

The Office of the Attorney General's three main areas of investigation are the complaints filed against Mafnas by two security guards and a dive instructor; the allegations contained in a petition signed by DPS employees against Mafnas; and a letter from a police captain alleging that Mafnas interfered with a murder investigation.

Fitial said the summary he received from the AG is "only like three pages."

He also said this summary report is only between him and the AG. This will not be communicated to Mafnas.

"This is only the first summary update," he added.

The Fitial administration has vowed to thoroughly and fairly investigate each complaint filed against Mafnas.

DPS deputy commissioner Ambrosio Ogumoro is the acting commissioner for both DPS and the Department of Corrections.

Of Judiciary's $4M budget request, $3.6M for 68 FTEs

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Of the CNMI Judiciary's $4 million budget request for fiscal year 2013, some $3.59 million is intended to pay for the salaries and benefits of 68 authorized full-time positions.

Acting Chief Justice Alexandro C. Castro and Presiding Judge Robert C. Naraja said this is an increase by two more FTEs than the 66 FTEs authorized in Public Law 17-55 for fiscal year 2012.

"Over the years, the Judiciary's expenditure and hiring authorities deliberately reduced the number of requested FTEs to reduce the size of the Judiciary's budget in direct response to dwindling government resources," said Castro and Naraja in the Judiciary's budget request recently submitted to the Legislature.

From 119 FTEs in 2003, the Judiciary's authorized FTEs were slashed to 66 in 2012—a 45-percent decrease in total staffing.

Castro and Naraja said the Judiciary has come to a point where further decreases in the number of FTEs is unsustainable.

The new requested FTEs for fiscal year 2013 are for the positions of deputy marshal for Tinian and secretary to associate judge with total salary and benefits of $24,467 and $27,698 respectively.

Castro and Naraja said the deputy marshal for Tinian was established by the Judiciary with funding from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009.

However, Castro and Naraja said, the grant funding for this position has been exhausted, and efforts to seek additional grant assistance to continue funding the position have been unsuccessful.

"As a result, there is no deputy marshal [on] Tinian at this time, and, moreover, there is currently only one other established FTE for the Judiciary on the island of Tinian [a Deputy Clerk I]," they said.

With respect to the secretary for associate judge, there are currently five Superior Court judges' chambers being serviced by four secretaries.

Castro and Naraja said a fifth secretary position had been authorized in previous appropriations but had been left unfilled due to budget shortfalls and, as a result, was subsequently eliminated.

Missing Guam jet skier found

APRA HARBOR, Guam—Rescue crews found the missing fisherman approximately 16 miles northwest of Ritidian Point separated from his jet ski.

The HSC-25 helicopter aircrew first sighted the abandoned jet ski with no sign of the operator. As the search expanded out from the jet ski, Yi Hong Ji was found two miles away in the water.

The rescue swimmer was deployed from the helicopter and hoisted Yi Hong Ji aboard for immediate transport to the hospital in stable condition.

"This successful case exemplifies the importance of our search and rescue partnerships across the island" said Capt. Casey White, Sector Guam commander. "Aside from the active participation of HSC-25, Guam Fire Rescue, Coast Guard cutter *Washington* and Station Apra Harbor on the water and in the air, we gained critical assistance from a local cell phone carrier in tracking where the 911 calls came from. This support immediately narrowed down our search area and enabled us to respond more rapidly."

Search and rescue crews searched an area covering 640 square miles, an area roughly two times the size of Guam, around Yi Hong Ji's believed last known location. ***(USCG)***

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HONOR SOCIETY INDUCTION

Hopwood Junior High School celebrates the induction of 25 new scholars to the National Junior Honor Society. The induction ceremony took place last Saturday at the Pacific Islands Club where about 100 plus teachers and staff, parents, families, and the students themselves witnessed the beautiful celebration. This event was coordinated and organized by NJHS advisers Vanessa Mobel, Wilma Hofschneider-David, Jenn Castro, Aryanne Maratita, Clare Mobel, Ruby Hocog, and Epi Cabrera. The keynote speaker was Physical Education teacher Ben Jones, who just joined the Hilitais.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Parents strongly oppose GTC-Tanapag school merger

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
moneth_deposa@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Several parents of students from Gregorio T. Camacho Elementary School expressed strong opposition to any plans of merging the school with other smaller public schools on island, saying this will change the character of GTC and is ultimately not in the best interest of children.

At least seven parents directly appealed yesterday to the Board of Education not to approve the merger.

Due to budgetary concerns, PSS merged the Rota Junior High and Rota High School last school year and renamed it the Dr. Rita Hocog Inos Jr./Sr. High School to save on personnel cost and resources.

Fearing that the same fate might happen to GTC, Lori Serna appealed to both the board and the Public School System leadership not to consider the merger and look at other areas where PSS can generate cost-savings.

GTC, Serna said, has not only met but exceeded her expectations in the three years her child has been in the school.

"I heard that BOE is considering to merge the two schools [Tanapag and GTC]. This will change the character of the school. GTC is fine, it's a great school and it's a shining example for other schools. This is not broken and doesn't need fixing," she said, adding that PSS, in fact, has rated GTC as among the system's performing schools with high student achievements and scores.

The overall Teacher of the Year was even from GTC last school year, she added.

John Oliver Gonzales and his wife also urged the board to keep the parents "in the loop" when it comes to planning for the schools and student learning. He asked about the available options that PSS can explore, as well as the worst and best case scenarios for public schools. "Please, we also want to become part of the solution," Gonzales told the board.

Caleb and Melisa Gatharngeg also spoke out against the merger plan. "Please consider our situation. When you move our school to other schools, it will cost us families more," Caleb Gatharngeg said.

Two other parents pushed for the continued existence of "local village schools" such as GTC. "If a choice has to be made between luxury on one hand and maintaining local village schools, please make the right decision—keep our village schools open," one parent said.

GTC principal Charlotte Camacho had only one request to the board: give GTC enough time to prepare, if a decision is made, so it could effectively implement whatever changes need to be made.

Board of Education chair Marylou S. Ada earlier disclosed that the board is evaluating all possible ways on how public schools will survive next school year, where it expects greater challenges due to budget constraints. Besides austerity measures, among these options is the consolidation of small schools and an across-the-board work-hour reduction.

No decision yet

Education Commissioner Dr. Rita A. Sablan told *Saipan Tribune* yesterday that there was initial discussion about the merger of some schools but no decision has been made yet.

"Although there have been some discussion, there's never a decision made because we have to look at the data. If the school enrollment continues to decrease, then it will be [done]. PSS needs to be mindful of the [available] resources," Sablan said after yesterday's meeting.

She promised that before a decision is made, "PSS will certainly talk to the grassroots—students, teachers, parents—because they play a critical role."

Sablan commended the parents for coming forward and offering their plans.

When asked about the possibility of merging GTC and Tanapag, she replied: "I really don't know yet, until the Legislature comes out with the final budget figures."

The board had proposed a $40-million budget for fiscal year 2013, but the governor's submission to the Legislature slashed the PSS budget to just $30 million.

"As we look at fiscal year 2013, it's not really very promising. The governor already transmitted the budget for PSS at $30 million so naturally, there's going to be a gap. We need to start looking at PSS from within—what more can we trim. We have gone out to teachers, principals, and parents to let them know of the condition of PSS," added Sablan.

Opening of new school year on Sept. 4

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
moneth_deposa@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Classes in public schools will officially start on Sept. 4, 2012, according to the Board of Education yesterday. The schedule will cover all levels in 19 campuses on Saipan, Tinian, and Rota.

Except for the school opening date, the board deferred action on the particulars of the proposed calendar for school year 2012-2013.

The decision to start the new school year on Sept. 4 was made after board member Tanya King raised the concerns of many teachers who want to have a sort of short break or intersession every quarter to make the necessary evaluation, assessment, and preparation for the next quarter.

King, who chairs the board's fiscal and personnel affairs committee, endorsed the new school year opening but pointed out the need for the proposed calendar to be discussed at the school level to gauge teachers' opinions.

According to Education Commissioner Rita A. Sablan, PSS recommended a 190-day calendar for new school year. Under the proposal, certified employees—classroom teachers, counselors, and teacher assistants—will render 180 days of instruction and will have 10 days for professional development and trainings.

"We have proposed a 190-day calendar. However, they have asked us if we can take it back and work with our schools—the faculty and administrators—to address the issues and concerns raised by some teachers which I have not heard. But I am more than happy to discuss it with the administrators and the school level," the commissioner told *Saipan Tribune* yesterday.

She said that whatever is agreed upon by teachers, PSS will be mindful of the final opening date set by the board.

During yesterday's meeting, Sablan said a possible intersession will not have much impact on the proposed 190-day calendar.

Board member Lucy Blanco-Maratita asked for the proper dissemination of information to stakeholders once details of the new calendar are adopted.

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PUBLIC NOTICE

"This Notice is paid for with HUD funds by NMHC"

April 3, 2012

Governor Benigno R. Fitial, Lt. Governor Eloy Inos, and the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation (NMHC) Board of Directors, through its Chairwoman, Ms. Marcie M. Tomokane, wish to announce that NMHC has revised its FY 2013 Annual Plan and is available for the public's review and comment. The Annual Plan encompasses the goals, objectives, and strategies of NMHC's Program and Housing Division and the Housing Choice Voucher Program (Section 8). Comments may be directed to:

Mr. Jesse S. Palacios
Acting Corporate Director
NMHC Central Office
P.O. Box 500514
Saipan, MP 96950

Comments may also be faxed to (670) 234-9021. The Annual Plan is also available for public review and comment at NMHC's Central Office located on Micro Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, as well as at the respective NMHC Field Offices on Tinian and Rota during regular business hours, Monday through Friday, except on CNMI holidays. The deadline for the comment period is at 4:30 pm on Thursday, May 3, 2012.

/s/ **Jesse S. Palacios**
Acting Corporate Director

COMMERCIAL SPACE FOR RENT

- **Beachside, Oleai:** Stand alone professional office / house-office or restaurant bar location along Beach Road, 1,800 sq. ft., with good parking, back up generator and beach access. Asking: $1,200.00/mo.
- **San Jose:** Former SDA Preschool building. Great location. Good condition with fenced yard. Asking: $1,000.00/mo.

HOUSE FOR RENT

- **San Jose House:** 5-bedroom and 2-bathroom house in San Jose. Good location near Dolphin Wholesale and San Jose Mart. Asking: $1,000.00/mo.

APARTMENT FOR RENT

- ANAKS Condominium: 1 unit available. 2-Bedroom, 1 ½-Bathroom. Ocean view. Asking: $900.00/mo.

AVAILABLE LAND

- **Vacant land in Tinian:** Available for farming or development. Close to San Jose.
  - i. Lot 031 T 10: 13,118 sq. m., Lot 031 T 11: 13,123 sq. m., Lot 031 T 12: 1,054 sq. m., and Lot 031 T 13: 1,048 sq. m. (4 lots) Asking: $60,000.00
  - ii. Lot 114 T 14: 4,185 sq. m. Asking: $8,000.00
  - iii. Lot 114 T 05: 25,000 sq. m. Asking: $50,000.00
  - iv. Lot 102 T 21: 3,643 sq. m. Asking: $7,500.00
  - v. Lot 118 T 04: 1,190 sq. m. Asking: $5,000.00
- **Vacant land in Capitol Hill:** 4,479 sq. m. available, zoned for residential purposes. Easement not presently open. Asking: $10,000.00
- **Vacant land on San Roque Beachfront:** Ideal for a small single house. Asking: $35,000.00

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For inquiries please contact Alexander Realty at:
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Website: www.realtysaipan.com

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Attorney for Petitioner Xiao, Rong Kun

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

IN THE MATTER OF **XIAO, MING XUAN LU, a minor child.**	**FCD CIVIL ACTION NO. 12-0176** **NOTICE OF HEARING**

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that a Petition for Appointment of Guardian Ad Litem, fled by Petitioner Xiao, Rong Kun, was filed in the above-entitled Court.

A hearing on this matter is set on May 17, 2012, at 9:30 a.m. at the Guma' Hustisia Building, Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

DATED, this 13 day of April, 2012:

BERNADITA A. SABLAN
Clerk of Court
/s/By: Deputy Clerk

Bautista, Lobao win PSS overall support staff awards

MONETH G. DEPOSA

The 2012 Support Staff of the Year awardees pose with members of the Education Board, PSS leadership team, and school principals after the awarding rites yesterday at the BOE conference room. Hailed this year's administrative staff is KagES' Louie Bautista, seated left, while WSR's Delfin Lobao, seated right, was named overall trade and maintenance of the year.

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
moneth_deposa@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Two longtime and dedicated employees of the Public School System received accolades yesterday from the Board of Education after being named the system's most outstanding support staff for school year 2011-2012.

Louie Bautista was hailed as PSS' overall administrative staff for 2012, while Delfin Lobao emerged as the trade maintenance of the year awardee.

The two accepted their plaques of recognition in a ceremony in front of members of the Education Board, led by chair Marylou S. Ada, the PSS leadership team, and school principals.

Bautista joined the Kagman Elementary School family in January 2005 as a school aide, a position that covers multiple tasks. In his eight years in service, the school's jack-of-all-trades has been recognized four times as its support staff of the year.

He expressed surprised yesterday upon learning of this latest recognition, saying this was his first time to actually bag the overall title.

Bautista believes that the deep commitment, dedication, and the quality of service he renders students set him apart. He gave thanks to his colleagues, the Education Board, Education Commissioner Rita A. Sablan, and his principal, Ignacia Demapan, who was also present in yesterday's ceremony.

William S. Reyes Elementary School's Delfin Lobao emerged as this year's trade maintenance of the year awardee. He is the school's custodian for 20 years now since 1992. He has previously been honored four times as the school's support staff of the year. The 66-year-old awardee said this is his first time to receive the overall award.

WSR principal Naomi Nishimura had nothing but good words for Lobao, whom she described as among the real backbones of the school. Nishimura said that Lobao is a great inspiration and truly deserving of the honor for devoting so much time and energy to the school.

Commissioner Sablan said that PSS continues to recognize not only its students but also its staffers in various positions. Yesterday's awarding rites is part of the celebration next week of the maintenance and administrative staff week at PSS.

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

PTA meeting at Saipan Southern High

To all parents and legal guardians of Saipan Southern High School students: There will be a PTA meeting on April 18, 2012, Wednesday, at 6pm in the Manta Café. Please join us as important information will be addressed. ***(PR)***

KagES calendar for April

Kagman Elementary School would like to inform all parents and guardians of the following important events for the month of April:

■ Wednesday, April 18, 2012: PTSA Meeting and Parent Literacy Night. 6-7pm.

■ Friday, April 20, 2012: Report card day, 1:30-3:30pm.

■ Friday, April 20, 2012: Early dismissal. 1st-6th grade, 12pm; Kindergarten, 10:30am.

■ Month of April: Registration for all grades ***(PR)***

John Gonzales LIVE schedule

John Gonzales LIVE airs Wednesday and rebroadcasts on Monday and Tuesday the following week, all from 6:30pm – 7:30pm on KMCV Channel 14. *John Gonzales LIVE* also rebroadcasts on the Web on Betelnut Radio (www.betelnutradio.com).

■ **April 18:** Austism in the CNMI in Celebration of Autism Awareness Month

Guests: Chad Merfalen, Autism Youth Self Advocate; Larissa Reyes, Autism Youth Self Advocate; and John Demapan, Autism Youth Self Advocate.

Live on April 18 and rebroadcasts on April 23 and 24. Airs on Betelnut Radio.com on April 19 at 6 pm Pacific Standard Time and 9pm Eastern Standard Time (Thursday, April 20 at 11am Chamorro Standard Time).

■ **April 25:** The Death of the NMI Retirement Fund…Or Salvation?

Guests: Lorenzo "Larry" DLG. Cabrera, CNMI Retirement Association president; Joseph M. Pangelinan, employed and unemployed vested members advocate; and Richard S. Villagomez, NMIRF administrator.

Live on April 25 and rebroadcasts on April 30 and May 1. Airs on Betelnut Radio.com on April 25 at 6pm Pacific Standard Time and 9pm Eastern Standard Time (Thursday, April 26 at 11am Chamorro Standard Time).

Viewers can participate by calling (287-4230), texting (285-META) (6382), or emailing (johngonzaleslive@gmail.com). ***(PR)***

Commonwealth Healthcare Corporation
Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands

WIC

ANNOUNCEMENT

The CNMI WIC (Women, Infants, and Children) Program is pleased to announce that they are now accepting applications for Saipan, Tinian and Rota Vendors.

All interested vendors may pick up an application at the main office located on Upper Navy Hill Building # N-25, starting April 05, 2012 through June 28, 2012 (Monday to Thursday) or request for an application via email at fabianu@cnmiwic.org.

Applications must be submitted to the CNMI WIC Program office no later than 4:00 p.m., June 28, 2012.

Prospective applicants are encouraged to carefully read through the information provided to ensure minimum qualifications are met.

Inquiries and technical questions may be directed to the Vendor Management Coordinator, Fabian M. Ulloa at (670) 664-4066, by email at fabianu@cnmiwic.org or by facsimile at (670) 664-4069.

USDA is an Equal Opportunity Provider and Employer.

/s/ Juan N. Babauta
Chief Executive Officer
Commonwealth Healthcare Corporation

/s/ Carmen C. Cabrera
Administrator
CNMI WIC Program

Commonwealth Healthcare Corporation
Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands

WIC

ANNOUNCEMENT

In an effort to strengthen our Program Integrity, the CNMI WIC Program would like to inform the General Public to report suspicious activities from WIC vendors and/or participants committing Fraud and Abuse by contacting the Quality Assurance Coordinator, Mr. Ponce Rasa at (670) 664-4068 and (670) 285-4068 or email at poncer@cnmiwic.org and the Vendor Management Coordinator, Mr. Fabian Ulloa at (670) 664-4066 and (670) 285-4073 or email at fabianu@cnmiwic.org.

Remember all tips or reports are kept confidential and callers may choose to remain anonymous.

USDA is an equal Opportunity Provider and Employer.

/s/ Juan N. Babauta
Chief Executive Officer
Commonwealth Healthcare Corporation

/s/ Carmen C. Cabrera
Administrator
CNMI WIC Program

MVA launches public online calendar

Ever wish there was one website where you could see all the public events happening this week in Saipan, Tinian, and Rota? Your wish is granted. The Marianas Visitors Authority has launched a new online calendar at www.mymarianas.com where event organizers can post events open to both visitors and residents.

"We welcome posts by community members with the goal of making www.mymarianas.com a one-stop calendar for any visitor planning their visit or any community member wanting to publicize their event," said MVA managing director Perry Tenorio. "Through the years, our online calendar of events has grown from events sponsored or supported by the MVA and our members to what we have today, an interactive, online calendar where any organization, office, or individual can submit an event for inclusion."

ON THE NET
www.mymarianas.com

The Calendar of Events is listed under the "What to Do" section of the website. Events open to the public and welcomed for posting include markets, fairs, festivals, fiestas, walkathons, concerts, exhibits, fundraisers, sporting events, and more. Events may be free or have an admission price.

"This is a great opportunity for the community to help support the tourism industry by allowing visitors to enrich their visit through community interaction," said Community Projects manager Martin Duenas. "We're looking forward to the growth of this resource."

Events submitted for inclusion will be reviewed for approval by the website administrator prior to posting. ***(MVA)***

NMC-CREES hosts free aquaculture presentations on Saipan and Rota

The Northern Marianas College Cooperative Research Extension and Education Service is inviting members of the community to attend free presentations about aquaculture on Saipan and Rota.

The first presentation will take place on Wednesday, April 25, from 1:30pm to 4:30pm in Room D-1 at the NMC As Terlaje campus on Saipan. The next presentation will take place on Friday, April 27, from 1pm to 4pm in the NMC-CREES Building at the NMC Rota Instructional Site.

Dr. Benny Ron, aquaculture program coordinator from the University of Hawaii, will present information on food security and appropriate aquaculture systems. In addition, Ron will introduce participants to UH's Aquaculture Training On-line Learning, or ATOLL program, and the worldwide AquacultureHub social network.

The ATOLL program is a training program designed to help individuals start their own fish farms by providing online educational instruction, resources and support. The AquacultureHub is a unique social network that aims to connect people interested in aquaculture with others who have similar interests.

For more information contact NMC-CREES aquaculture specialist Michael Ogo at 234-5498 Ext. 1728 or michaelo@nmcnet.edu. ***(NMC)***

NEW TALK SHOW CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Teen Talk, a volunteer youth/peer education group from the CNMI Public School System's Youth Development Program since 2001, premiered their new talk show at the American Memorial Park Visitor Center on Friday, April 13, 2012. Teen Talk would like to thank of Education Commissioner Rita A. Sablan, Associate Commissioner Jackie Quitugua, Board of Education chair Marylou Ada and members, Science/Health/HIV program coordinator Vina Saures, Commonwealth Health Corp. Division of Public Health director Roxanne Diaz, PSS Teen Talk advisers Freddy Salavaria, Monica Pangelinan, and Sharleen Crisostimo, parents/guardians, their respective school principals, Emelinda Cabrera, Digital Motion's Edwin Sta. Theresa, Kevin Jardinero, Bernard Rivera, and Salvi Villanueva, for all their help and support in making the show. Special thanks to CHC Division of Public Health Communicable Disease manager John Dax Moreno, for being the first guest on the show, American Memorial Park's Ranger Nancy Kelchner and Jessica Guerrero for their help and hospitality, Rep. Edmund Villagomez, Ed Arriola, and Marilou Gariguez from Tan Holdings and Tan Siu Lin Foundation, and the Advanced Language Academic Institute, for attending the premier and continued support for Teen Talk.

BIRTHDAY SHOUTOUT

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Happy birthday to our daddy, Lino P. Tenorio! Thank you for being such a great daddy! Hope you enjoy your day! We love you so much! May the Lord bless you! Love, Nunuboy, Yasmine, and Mommy.

OIA funds RMI Auditor-General's Office

WASHINGTON, D.C.—The Department of the Interior's Assistant Secretary for Insular Areas, Tony Babauta, has authorized a grant in the amount of $110,500 to recruit a Certified Fraud Examiner for the Republic of the Marshall Islands.

The request comes as part of a coordinated effort of the RMI's Office of the Auditor-General and the Ministry of Finance in their attempts to bolster and improve ongoing reviews of alleged fraud and embezzlement of public funds.

"I am pleased to be supporting efforts to improve the RMI's capacity to reduce the incidence of fraud and implement processes that prevent it from occurring in the first place. I commend President Loeak and the RMI leadership for emphasizing the development of effective protocols for carrying out fraud investigations and unethical conduct," said Babauta.

The Technical Assistance grant will assist the OAG in developing a comprehensive approach to its review process and strengthen investigations through CFE expertise in fraud prevention, detection and deterrence. Additionally, the staff of the OAG will receive needed hands-on training in order to better recognize "red flags," weaknesses in internal controls and procedures that may leave the RMI government open to fraud, waste and abuse of public funds. Improved procedures and training to build the capacity of the local workforce will help to ensure that improved processes continue as part of the normal course of daily activities. ***(DOI)***

Flashback

A LOOK BACK AT PAST YEARS' HEADLINES

Apr. 17, 2000

Fitial chairs GWB for President Committee

House Speaker Benigno R. Fitial has been appointed chair of the George W. Bush for President Committee for the Northern Marianas. The appointment was made last week during the Washington D.C. visit of the delegation from the CNMI House of Representatives. The local committee has scheduled its first fundraising here for the Republican candidate on June 9 where a cousin of Mr. Bush is expected to attend, according to Mr. Fitial. Mr. Bush, son of the former U.S. president, is facing Vice President Al Gore, the Democrats' bet for the White House during the elections on November.

CDA eyes stricter regs in loan approval

The Commonwealth Development Authority may have to require borrowers to undergo loan counseling soon if only to make sure they will not remiss on their monthly payment obligations once their credit applications are approved. CDA Board Chair John S. Tenorio said completion of a series of loan counseling sessions is one of the new requirements being looked at by the government's lending arm in its efforts to address problems on swelling delinquency rate. Mr. Tenorio said the move may also be taken to untangle numerous loan applications now pending before the development authority because of the ever growing demand for fresh money by the business sector due to economic slowdown.

Apr. 17, 2001

CNMI, Guam violate US laws on betel nut

Both the Northern Marianas and Guam violate existing statute of the federal government strictly banning the entry of betel nut into the mainland United States and other territories. The updated policy on importation of betel nut into the U.S., including Guam and the CNMI, allows the Food and Drug Administration to refuse the commercial entry of these popular fruit. According to U.S. Department of Agriculture, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service Director Mitchell G. Nelson, Guam and the CNMI continuously ignore the federal law that changes had already been made to include the two territories.

BOE seeks proper filing of candidates' finances

The Board of Election will require all candidates running for public offices in November to file accurate financial reports including assets, liabilities and election campaign kitty. In a joint effort with the Office of Public Auditor, BOE will hold a financial reporting workshop for all candidates next month to educate them on BOE-amended regulations. BOE Executive Director Greg Sablan said there are changes in existing election rules and policies, which candidates should be aware of particularly on financial reporting.

Apr. 17, 2002

$2M for tourism plan backed

The Legislature has agreed to support the Governor's initiative to bring in an additional 100,000 Japanese tourists to the CNMI by ensuring the passage of legislation that would appropriate over $2 million that would fund the additional promotional activities needed. Senate President Paul A. Manglona assured that both the House of Representatives and the Senate would support the passage of appropriation that would set aside money to fund the additional advertising and promotional activities of the project. "Of course, our support will be translated into dollars because they would need more money for advertising and promotion, especially in the Tokyo and Osaka areas, which are our strongest base. We would support legislation that would provide this additional funding," he said.

'PMC-GHLI standoff is No.1 priority'

Calling it the biggest issue facing him, newly hired Northern Mariana Islands Retirement Fund Administrator Karl T. Reyes yesterday said he plans to immediately address the standoff between the local health providers and Group Health and Life Insurance program, which the Fund administers. "It is necessary to address this at once because it involves the welfare of the members of the plan. Local health providers are very important to our community and there are maybe as many as 5,000 government workers who could be placed at a disadvantage if this thing is not resolved," he said. Reyes stressed, however, that there are industry standards and rates that the local providers have to follow "and this is where the differences come in."

'Trashion' makes high fashion out of recyclables

By CLARISSA V. DAVID
clarissa_david@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Young models representing various schools on island walked the runway in original designs made of recyclable materials for the Trash-In Fashion Show or "Trashion" at the Saipan Grand Hotel lobby last April 14.

The event, which coincided with the hotel's weekly food fair, was held in collaboration with the Division of Environmental Quality and the nonprofit group Mariana Islands Nature Alliance to support the Environmental Awareness Month celebration this April.

Saturday's show featured 24 models wearing outfits created by designers Nhemie Cayao and Remy Rebellon. The two used materials such as empty rice sacks, cigarette foils, trash bags, chicken buckets, hotel bed pads and pillows, old electrical wires, soda can tabs, chicken feathers, soap packaging, phone directory, and bubble wrap in putting together fashionable ensembles.

Trashion showed that anyone can make something usable out of "re-usables," according to DEQ's Olivia Tebuteb who pointed out that the event served as an educational avenue for the youth of the CNMI "to explore the sustainable eco-trends in recycling."

"This year, the Trash-In Fashion Show aims at instilling the importance of the 4Rs: "Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, Respect" philosophy throughout our local community and for tomorrow's leaders," added Tebuteb.

Model Rosemarie Liangco, an 11th grader at Marianas High School, said taking part in the event was "really fun" because of all the "cool things" she has learned.

"You can do a lot of things out of normal things that people would just throw away. That's always good, learning ways to help our environment," the 17-year-old Liangco told *Saipan Tribune*.

JM Solomon, a sophomore at MHS, said that besides knowing more about the importance of recycling, he also got to know himself better.

"It taught me how to trust and be proud of myself," said Solomon, 16.

Event organizer Sharmaine Casquero said the fashion show took about two months of preparation. "We wanted to bring awareness to the students of the CNMI that we have to take good care of our Mother Earth and we achieved that tonight," Casquero told *Saipan Tribune*.

Both Casquero and Tebuteb said that Trashion was a preview to a bigger and better fashion show that will be held on Thursday, from 7pm to 9pm at the American Memorial Park Amphitheater. This event will culminate DEQ's three-day Environmental Expo from April 17 to 19.

PHOTOS BY CLARISSA V. DAVID

Male models were debonair in their vests, short and long pants designed by Nhemie Cayao and Remy Rebellon.

Female models look elegant in their "recyclable" haute couture at the Trashion Fashion Show held at the Saipan Grand Hotel lobby last Saturday.

Younger models look like experts on the runway as they posed on stage wearing an attire made of recyclable materials.

A young model struts his a vest and short pants made out of rice sacks.

A female high school student walks the runway garbed in a skirt created out of recyclable materials.

A young female model looks "classy"—not trashy—with a dress made out of trash bags.

Opinion

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER
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MEMBER

The Associated Press | Pacific Islands News Association

EDITORIAL

How smart is $1 billion for a smartphone app?

The following editorial appeared in the Los Angeles Times *on Thursday, April 12:*

Facebook's decision to pay $1 billion in stock and cash to buy Instagram, a company with one product and no revenue, inspired many people to consider a new career writing smartphone applications. Others wondered whether the purchase was just the latest sign of a new dot-com bubble, with the mania this time inspired by social technology and mobile apps. The truth is that the deal is more a reflection of the evolving economics of the Internet than a sign that valuations have lost all connection to reality.

Instagram is an app for iPhones and Android-based smartphones that lets people jazz up their photos (making them look like old Polaroids, for example) and share them with other Instagram users and websites. Launched a year and a half ago, it became the fastest-growing social network not named Facebook, attracting more than 30 million users, many of them young people habituated to documenting their lives through a smartphone's camera lens.

Given that one of the main reasons people use Facebook is to share photos (by one estimate, 20 percent of the photos taken last year will eventually end up on the social network), it's easy to see why Facebook chief executive Mark Zuckerberg would regard Instagram as a threat. Spending $1 billion to take out that competitor and absorb its superior technology makes a certain amount of sense for his company, which has an estimated market value 100 times as great.

In doing so, however, Facebook inflated the price of a host of other companies with popular social apps but not much in the way of revenue, such as Twitter and Pinterest. Yet that may not be as troublesome as in the late 1990s, when companies went public without viable business models only to crash spectacularly when the market tanked. In the intervening years, companies such as YouTube and Facebook have proved that there is a real market for social media or content that can be shared online. And advertisers are increasingly following consumers to the apps and sites where they're spending much of their time.

Instagram users devote hours to it every month, uploading 5 million photos daily. More important, they interact with the pictures shared, offering more than 650 comments or ratings per second. That kind of attention is what advertisers call a high level of engagement, and they're eager to be part of it. Internet users, meanwhile, have shown that they're willing to pay for premium versions of the free apps they love—witness the success of Rovio's Angry Birds and Spotify's subscription music service.

It's an open question whether Instagram would have figured out how to monetize the app without driving off users, or whether Facebook will. But Instagram doesn't look anything like Pets.com, even at $1 billion.

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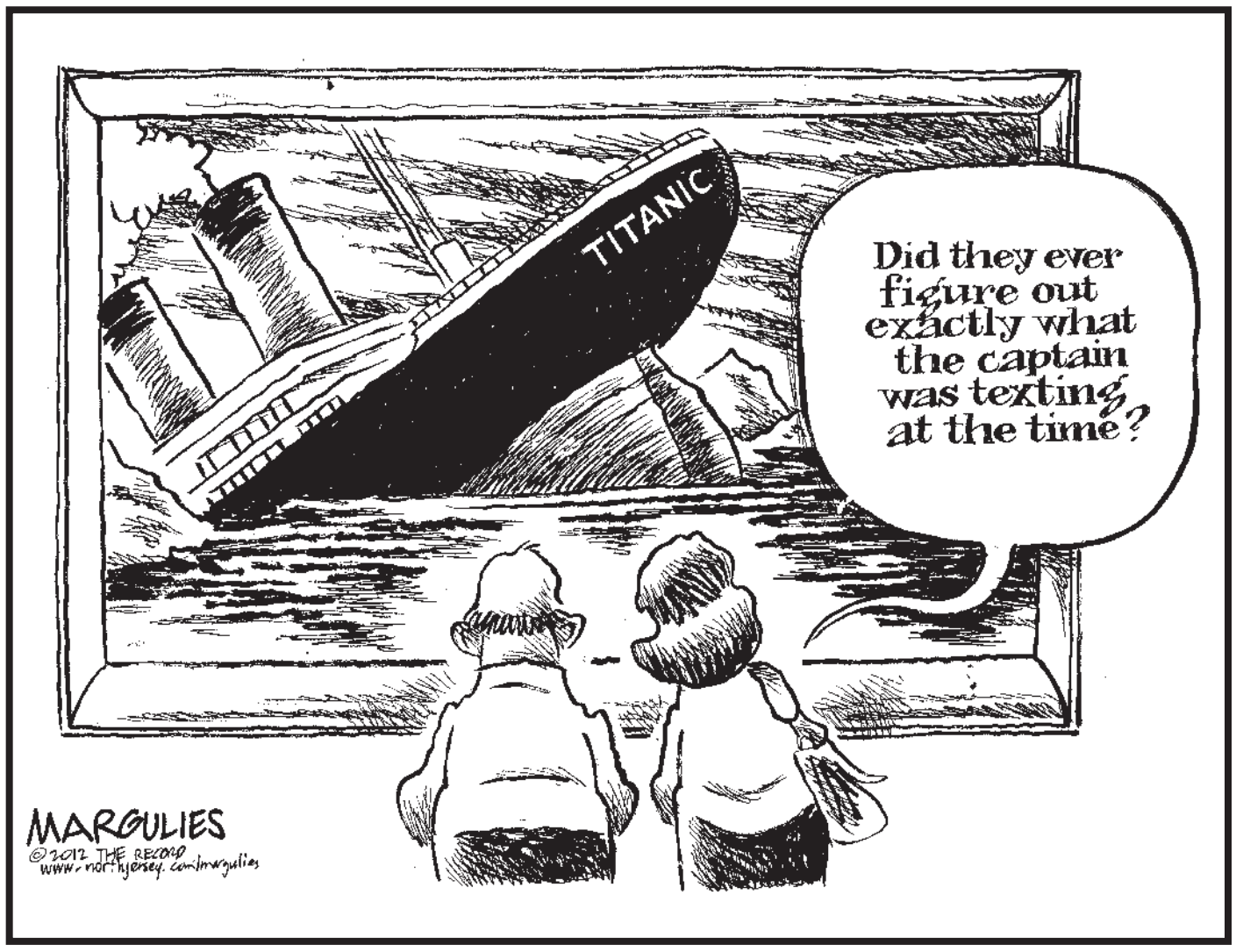
TITANIC
Did they ever figure out exactly what the captain was texting at the time?
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The 04.04. dream 44 years ago

By JAIME VERGARA
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Jaime R. Vergara (jrvergarajr2031@aol.com) is a former PSS teacher and is currently writing from the campus of Shenyang Aerospace University in China.

I remember the date well. A couple of Pinoy salts stationed at the nearby NAS north of Dallas, Texas came by the university dorm at Hillcrest on Highland Park with a bottle of Johnny Walker Black Label Scotch whiskey. I had bumped into them a week before at the upscale Northwest Highway shopping mall. Extending the customary invitation to stop by when they were near the campus, the guys took me up on my offer and came bearing gifts from their PX. It was not yet the weekend but I had to play host to the new *kabayan* who obviously were lonely in their new posting.

The bottle emptied fast and being the prudent one, and also working on the night shift at the university motel, I was not as sauced up as the other two, so I volunteered to drive them back to their base before it got dark. A big mistake, doubled when I turned over the steering wheel to one of the guys in the outskirt of town after he insisted that he could handle the drive.

No more than 10 minutes later, sitting at the edge of the back seat while the driver endlessly and carelessly gabbed, we got to the top of the hill and he took his eyes off the road long enough to miss a red light while we were heading downhill. "What a way to go," stoically came out of my mouth.

When I came to, the smell of gasoline and blaring fire truck sirens got my adrenaline going and I crawled out of the back seat, walked to a public phone, and asked my roommate to come and pick me up. He did.

By the time we got back to the campus, I was stiff and immobile so we went directly to the infirmary where it was determined that I was in shock and needed to be checked in case some bones were broken.

I woke up to the care of a rotund jovial nurse who came in to turn on the late night news. She had venom on her lips. "They finally got the nigger!" she exclaimed as the broadcast reported the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. a minute after 6pm in Memphis, Tennessee, just about the time I hit coma.

The John Birch Society Headquarters was a block away, and Dallas was not known to be gentle with its African-American population, more so if they were identified as red commies like MLK. Five years earlier, one of Dallas' white boys fatally put a bullet on JFK's brain. So I was not surprised by the toxic comment. Still her utterance stung my tender sensibilities but also left an indelible mark on my rebellious soul.

I spent my university first semester protesting a Laundromat that displayed a bold sign: "For Whites Only" near the Hilton by Central Express Way. A school professor and a number of students held a noon vigil at the school flagpole to protest the Vietnam War. We were a minority and I was a foreign student who was cautioned from participating in domestic politics so I joined the university paper and attended gatherings as a student reporter.

It was in that capacity that I joined an all-day drive to Washington, D.C. mid-February '68 to cover a march to the Arlington cemetery that united anti-war forces and civil rights activists in assailing the waste of lives and money on a senseless racist war in Asia against Vietnamese "gooks"; the budget for the War on Poverty suffered. MLK, just 39, along with an inter-faith group of leaders, led the march. His contextual speech at the New York Ave. Presbyterian Church on 13th St. three blocks from the White House, the Lincolns' Sunday hangout a century before, would prove to be a decisive turning point in my vocation and career.

Impressed by the Atlanta preacher, and committed to a cause I was forbidden to join, I nevertheless returned to my Ivy League institution in the nation's Southwest a determined warrior in the army of human justice and ethical sanity.

After the newscast, my girlfriend who would later mother two of my daughters called shortly before midnight from Greensboro, North Carolina, where she was attending college. A Welsh-Scot-German lass from Glen Ellyn outside of Chicago, she was at a church-related institution in the Piedmont where civil rights sit-ins got its start. She was in tears as she described the flames consuming parts of the city, my aching body barely able to stay on the phone, but my soul was seared that day, triggered by the callous remark of one of our university's healing practitioners.

The material I pass out to my students in Oral English here in China has six speeches including Abe's *Gettysburg,* JFK's *Ask Not* and MLK Jr.'s *I Have a Dream.* The central image for the whole document of songs, speeches, and a couple of narratives is that of the "butterfly," the mythological animal for dreaming—both practical and imaginal. The short bio-line of the authors states that all died from assassination, adding that "dreaming is a dangerous business."

Skepticism, cynicism, and despair flavors our time. Indeed, the human mind seem inclined to indulge in illusory "what is not" and decry "what is." Online news outlets are tabloids magnified. Cartoons and the comic page, even in the China daily, carries popular but mean-spirited humor.

I have not stopped dreaming since that fateful 4th day of the 4th month 44 years ago. We survived a couple of live bullets along the way, and our name is not on the endangered species' list. We'll keep on dreaming, nonetheless.

EDITORIAL POLICY Letters to the editor must include the name, address, and contact number of the contributor. Letters that are critical in nature should focus on issues, not personalities. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

More oil won't end our oil habit

By PETER GOLDMARK
Newsday

Peter Goldmark, a former budget director of New York State, is a member of the State Budget Crisis Task Force co-chaired by Paul Volcker and Richard Ravitch. He wrote this for Newsday.

There's a lot of buzz these days that the United States is becoming more "energy independent" and relying less on imported oil for our vehicle fuel. If you don't read too closely, you might think that we were on the verge of actually doing that.

We're not. Most of the hype is occasioned by the fact that we are importing slightly less foreign oil than we did a few years ago, and pumping out more of our own. A lot of what we're pumping in the United States is from wells drilled some time ago; the oil left in them was too expensive to recover, but with the price of oil soaring, it's profitable to go back and pump out that residue.

And our economy, caught in a long recession, continues to be held back by the high cost of oil. It's the end of the old movie, not the beginning of a new one.

The average price of Brent crude, an international benchmark for oil prices, again exceeded $100 per barrel in 2011 (the first time was in 2008). You and I feel this every time we fill up at the gas pump. The realistic outlook is for the cost of oil to continue rising—with short-term ups and downs—throughout this decade and probably beyond.

There are several reasons, but three of the most important are these: First, more oil continues to be discovered, but it is more difficult and more costly to extract; second, the growth of the emerging economies, such as India and China, means global demand will continue to increase significantly; and third, it is the policy of the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting

Countries, whose members sit atop roughly 80 percent of the world's reserves, to keep prices high as a continuing source of wealth and income—even though for some of them, the cost of pumping a barrel of oil may be as little as a tenth of the world price per barrel. In a famous 2008 interview, the Saudi oil minister said without batting an eyelash that the cost for his country to pump a barrel of oil was $2.

All three of these reasons point to the same conclusion for the United States: We must get off imported oil, and get off expensive oil.

The ugly truth that the champions of "drill, baby, drill" never tell us is that while new drilling will make a huge contribution to oil company profits, it will make only a small, and very expensive, contribution to our fuel needs. If our country continues to rely on oil, we will be faced with same three unpleasant consequences that confront us today.

We will still be dangerously dependent on oil imported from foreign countries, some of whose interests are, to put it mildly, not aligned with ours. Our economy will still be yoked to a costly energy system that acts as a brake on growth. And the transportation sector, the part of our economy most completely chained to oil today, will continue to be a huge emitter of greenhouse gases. Not a good place to be.

But the modest surge in domestically produced oil, plus slightly reduced oil consumption overall caused by the recession and more efficient vehicles, can buy us time to get on a new track. And that track should aim at replacing most of our imported oil with cheaper, cleaner, domestically produced fuels.

Those fuels—natural gas, methanol and ethanol—exist here in abundance. It will take some work to harness and adapt to them—and we'll have to make sure the hydrofracking to get some of the natural gas is done safely—but we can do it. That new track will require investment; that's good for creating jobs. It will speed growth and increase competitiveness; that's good for the economy. It will free us from the pressures of foreign oil exporters on whom we rely; that's essential.

And it will reduce carbon emissions; that's good for all of us.

Letters to the Editor

Let your voice be heard

Dear active employees of the defined benefit retirement plan: Before the big news, here are some old facts and some new ones:

- The Fund has 2-3 years left.
- Judge Govendo issued a court order mandating that the Fund reserve $113 million for our refunds.
- Buck Consultants, a private auditing firm, recommended that the Fund let us take our money. Why? To strengthen the Fund for the current retirees (reduce future liability)
- However, given these facts, why is it virtually impossible for us to take our money out (quit for 6-9 months)?
- Now there is the threat of "receivership" by June 15 if the government doesn't present a satisfactory plan to save the Fund
- "Receivership" is part of a bankruptcy process, whereby assets are divided "equitably."
- Two attorneys told me that it is possible that we would only receive a "small settlement" in a receivership process.

Now for the big news: Last week the conference committee responsible for reviewing Eli Cabrera's bill (H.B. 17-226) passed a resolution to allow us to take 50 percent of our money out and transfer the remaining 50 percent to the defined contribution plan, without having to quit our jobs. However, now it needs to pass the House, the Senate, then the Governor.

Why this is important: This appears to be our last chance to get our refunds. You need to let your senator or congressman know how important this is to you. You need to let them know that you are among thousands of active employees who will keep track of how they vote on this revised bill. Please remember that you are their political future.

You can call the House clerk at 664-8856 to find out how to contact your representatives.

You can go to their http://www.cnmileg.gov.mp/, click on HOUSE or SENATE, then MEMBERS. Just click their names to send an email.

You can go to the Legislature in person and ask to talk to them.

Here is a sample letter/conversation:

Dear representative/senator,

Please support the current committee revision of Eli Cabrera's bill (H.B. 17-226) allowing us to withdraw our money without having to quit our jobs for six months. Many of us have been paying into the Fund for years, and have no other source of future retirement income (including Social Security), should the Fund collapse as is currently predicted. Making six months the rule is discriminatory and unfair. It penalizes those who cannot afford to go without income that long; it also jeopardizes programs that rely on seasoned employees. The bill is a win-win for current retirees and active employees. The retirees will be able to contain their money without having to pay us out in the future, and we will be able to reinvest our money for a retirement we have earned.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Mark Staal
As Matuis, Saipan

Integrity

Saipan Tribune reported: "BOE closes probes on annual leave cash-out." It is amazing how PSS financial management works. They seem to have a magician that with, a cover of a black handkerchief, the annual leave cash-out instantly becomes one payroll advance. I wonder how many magicians are working at PSS. The investigation alleged that some personnel cashed out up to 400 hours of annual leave, and BOE chair Ada reported that the amount received by those involved just amounted to about $2,000, and Ada described the matter as a minimal problem that was easily resolved. I hope BOE is not building bridges for corruption.

What about the two approving officials, Waldo and Rita, and their action and violation of BOE policy? What course of action was taken by BOE? Justice must be served on individuals involved in these kinds of activities, big or small, in order to maintain the trust of dedicated teachers, principals, and parents.

As long as the magician is still with PSS, no matter how much money is given to PSS, they will never have enough, cause the magician can turn numbers into letters and the money can disappear without a trace. But I am pretty sure the Inspector General, FBI, and the Office of the Public Auditor would like to go after those magicians.

One auditor says: "It's better to be chased by a dog 'cause the dog might not catch you, than by an auditor who is capable of smelling and following your traces until they catch you."

Judge Joseph Camacho said, "There can be no justice without appropriate punishment."

Former OPA Lamote said: "No amount of responsibilities can entitle the executive director to misuse government funds for her personal gain and ignore responsibilities to properly manage government resources." (You may replace executive director with COE, BOE, etc.)

The old saying: "Your credential on the wall does not make you a decent person."

Whatever action is taken by the Board of Education on illegal activities would reflect their integrity. Therefore, I'm urging BOE members to do the right thing, don't build bridges for corruptions. Two of Saipan BOE members will be up for re-election this November. The people of Saipan will vote for candidates who have integrity. So BOE, prove yourself.

This is my second letter regarding PSS and many of you are wondering why I'm doing this. It took me two years to come back to life. In April 2010, I was told by my cardiologist that my two heart bypass collapsed. I then become very, very sick between the months of June and July 2010, in and out of ER. I was working for PSS, so I submitted my application for disability retirement with my doctor's certification. The Commissioner of Education denied my application for disability retirement. I appealed my case to the Board of Education, none of the members responded to me, so I appealed my case to NMPASI. If you are in my shoes, what do you do? Do not do unto others as you don't want them to do unto you. What goes around comes around.

Remi Sablan
Garapan, Saipan

Thank you

Please allow us to recognize great things by great folks in our community. A big shoutout and kudos to Jackson Kaipat Davis and Jerome Savea for their hard work and dedication in mounting the "Stop" traffic signs at one of the busiest intersections in Chalan Kanoa (Texas Road crossover from District 1 & District 2).

In the last two weeks, there have been two vehicular accidents at this particular intersection. The first incident involved a police sport utility vehicle driven by a policewoman and the other vehicle was driven by a male Chinese taxi driver. The second incident involved an elderly local woman and an Asia woman that caused the elderly woman's car to spin 180 degrees from her intended travel route. Luckily, the drivers and passengers in both incidents left the scene of the accident with no body injury.

However, in the last several years the community has seen numerous vehicular accidents at this particular intersection because the designated traffic signs were not in place. This intersection receives the traffic flow from the Tun Joaquin Doi Road heading in either direction east or westbound. Texas road, which is the crossover street, receives traffic from either north or southbound.

Also, a big shoutout to Tom Camacho from DPW for his immediate response and leadership in following through with the request to ensure the safety of our community. *Un dangkulu na Si Yu'us Ma'ase!*

Liana Sablan Hofschneider
Eric Benavente Atalig
Chalan Kanoa, Saipan

Giving him the flowers

The recent naming of the Benjamin Taisacan Manglona International Airport reminded me of a song and tradition at the church I grew up in back home in Memphis. Every year we would give our pastor an anniversary celebration and a song was created for the occasion: "Give them the flowers (that went on to say), while they live trying to cheer them on, useless the flowers after they're gone." These two lines send a very strong message that we should honor our great people while they are still with us and I am so glad for one of the CNMI's founding fathers to be able to see this monumental and immortalizing event. Rota, you got it right and I am so glad and happy for the man that helped to create the United States Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

I must say one more time: *Biba* Ben, *biba* Ben, *biba* Ben! God bless the people of Rota for getting it done as too often we wait until it is too late and the honoree never knew how much they were appreciated. I also want to say to Ben that I have been one of his admires since I first began to study the history of the CNMI. Your visits to my classroom to tell students the history of the CNMI will never be forgotten as you have been a genuine trooper for the CNMI and especially for the people of Rota. His "Rota is delicious" is a fitting slogan that I hope the people will consider preserving with a big sign at his airport, if you haven't already done it.

I wanted to use one of his titles with his name in this letter but he had so many titles I don't even know how to address the great Benjamin Taisacan Manglona. But I'm sure he won't mind me referring to him as one of the CNMI's greatest citizens who exemplified public service with a passion for helping people.

Ambrose M. Bennett
Kagman, Saipan

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam Homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

The Weather

5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds around 10 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds around 10 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
▲88° ▼76°	▲87° ▼76°	▲87° ▼76°	▲87° ▼76°	▲87° ▼76°

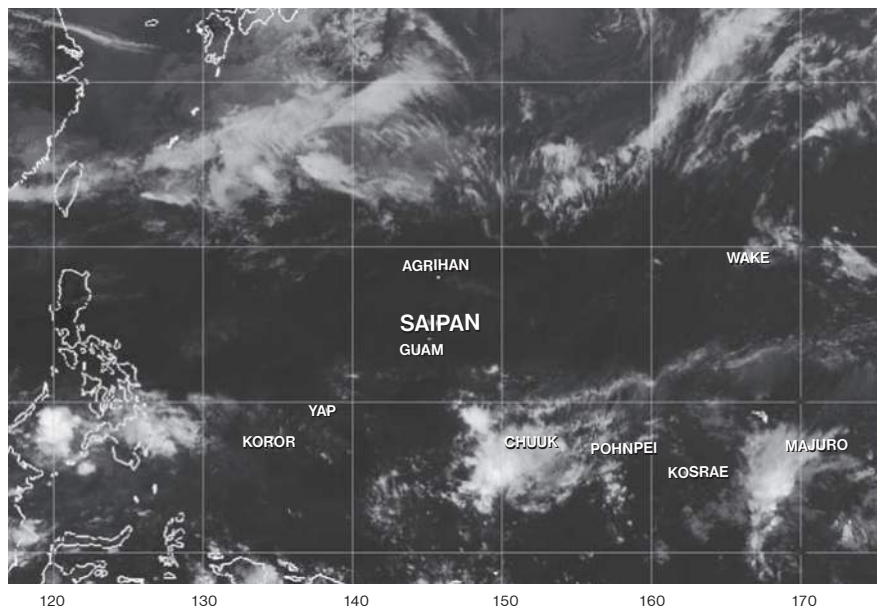
Micronesia

Guam and Rota	Thundershowers	▲89	▼78
Palau	Thunderstorms	▲87	▼77
Yap	Showers	▲88	▼78
Chuuk	Showers	▲90	▼80
Pohnpei	Thunderstorms	▲86	▼79
Kosrae	Thunderstorms	▲86	▼79
Majuro	Showers	▲86	▼80

Around The Globe

Auckland	Partly Cloudy	▲68	▼59
Beijing	Windy	▲87	▼57
Hong Kong	Thundershowers	▲77	▼74
Honolulu	Partly Cloudy	▲82	▼70
London	Showers	▲56	▼46
Los Angeles	Sunny	▲74	▼56
Manila	Partly Cloudy	▲96	▼79
Melbourne	Partly Cloudy	▲77	▼50
Miami	Partly Cloudy	▲81	▼71
New York	Partly Cloudy	▲86	▼61
Osaka	Sunny	▲66	▼46
Paris	Showers	▲51	▼42
Pusan	Windy	▲62	▼49
Rome	Showers	▲66	▼47
Salem	Rain	▲56	▼39
San Francisco	Partly Cloudy	▲64	▼53
Seoul	Sunny	▲66	▼41
Tokyo	Showers	▲64	▼50
Washington, DC	Sunny	▲89	▼63

Yesterday's Satellite Image



PICTURE TIME: 1:00PM, MONDAY, APRIL 16, 2012
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A cold front meanders westward from 25N156E to beyond 130E at 23N. Scattered showers and a few thunderstorms near Iwo To and Minami Tori Shima islands are along and north of the front to beyond 25N. A surface trough just west of Chuuk extends from 2N148E to 10N149E. Scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms near Chuuk and west of Pohnpei are between 3N and 9N from 147E to 156E. Another surface trough between Kosrae and Majuro is producing scattered showers and a few thunderstorms between 2N and 8N from 166E to 171E. A trade-wind disturbance approaching Tarawa and Butaritari is causing scattered showers between the equator and 5N east of 173E. Converging southeast winds near Wake Island are triggering scattered showers and a few thunderstorms within 100 miles of 20N167E and within 75 miles 19N174E.

Tides

Saipan Harbor

6:20 AM	Today	High Tide:	1.8 Feet
12:45 PM	Today	Low Tide:	0.6 Feet
6:26 PM	Today	High Tide:	1.6 Feet

Sunrise/Sunset

Today	6:02 AM	6:32 PM
Wednesday	6:01 AM	6:32 PM
Thursday	6:00 AM	6:32 PM
Friday	6:00 AM	6:32 PM
Saturday	5:59 AM	6:32 PM

Moonrise/Moonset

Today	3:05 AM	3:18 PM
Wednesday	3:43 AM	4:06 PM
Thursday	4:20 AM	4:54 PM
Friday	4:58 AM	5:42 PM
Saturday	5:37 AM	6:30 PM

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JANUARY 11, 2012

DEPARTURES

GUAM (GUM)-ROTA (ROP)			
C05062	2:10am	2:40am	1, 5
SAIPAN (SPN)-ROTA (ROP)			
C05064	4:15am	4:50am	1, 5
SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)			
C05064	4:15am	5:45am	1, 5 via ROP
C05070	4:35am	5:25am	2, 3, 4, 6, 7
C05068	8:25am	9:15am	Daily
C05074	12:10pm	1:00pm	1, 4, 5, 7
C05076	3:10pm	4:00pm	1, 2, 4, 5, 7
C05078	6:50pm	7:40pm	1, 2, 4, 5, 7
C05078	7:00pm	7:50pm	3, 6
C05072	9:55pm	10:45pm	1, 2, 4, 5, 7
C05072	10:05pm	10:55pm	3, 6
SAIPAN-NARITA (NRT)			
DL287	6:00am	8:40am	Daily
DL285	6:35am	9:15am	1, 3, 5, 7
DL297	4:25pm	7:15pm	Daily
SAIPAN-OSAKA (KIX)			
OZ119	4:00am	6:40am	Daily
SAIPAN-SEOUL (ICN)			
OZ606	2:10am	6:00am	1
OZ606	2:40am	6:30am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
OZ119	4:00am	11:20am	Daily via KIX
OZ604	3:20pm	7:10pm	Daily
SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)			
OZ608	3:35am	7:05am	4, 7
DL581	4:10am	7:30am	1, 5
SAIPAN-GUANZHOU (CAN)			
3U8646	4:20am	7:30am	2, 6
SAIPAN-SHANGHAI (PVG)			
3U8648	6:10am	8:40am	1, 4, 5, 7
SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)			
OZ606/701	2:10am	11:15am	1 via ICN
OZ606/701	2:40am	11:15am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
C05070/191	4:35am	9:45am	3, 6 via GUM
DL287/173	6:00am	10:25pm	Daily via NRT
C05068/183	8:25am	9:25pm	2, 5 via GUM
C05068/183	8:25am	9:40pm	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
C05076/183	3:10pm	9:25pm	2, 5 via GUM
C05076/183	3:10pm	9:40pm	1, 4, 7 via GUM
C05076/193	3:10pm	11:00pm	2, 5 via GUM-Palau
OZ604/703	3:20pm	11:00pm	Daily via ICN
C05072/PR111	9:55pm	7:50am+1	1, 5, 7 via GUM
C05072/PR111	10:05pm	7:50am+1	3, 6 via GUM
SAIPAN-HONG KONG (HKG)			
OZ606/721	2:10am	12:00pm	1 via ICN
OZ606/721	2:40am	12:00pm	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
C05076/147	3:10pm	10:25pm	1, 5 via GUM
OZ604/723	3:20pm	10:30pm	Daily via ICN
OZ604/749	3:20pm	10:50pm	Daily via ICN

ARRIVALS

ROTA (ROP)-GUAM (GUM)			
C05064	5:15am	5:45am	1, 5
ROTA (ROP)-SAIPAN (SPN)			
C05062	3:10am	3:45am	1, 5
GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN			
C05062	2:10am	3:45am	1, 5 via ROP
C05069	2:45am	3:35am	2, 3, 4, 6, 7
C05071	7:00am	7:50am	Daily
C05073	10:05am	10:55am	1, 2, 4, 5, 7
C05075	1:40pm	2:30pm	1, 4, 5, 7
C05077	5:30pm	6:20pm	1, 2, 4, 5, 7
C05077	5:40pm	6:30pm	3, 6
C05079	8:35pm	9:25pm	1, 2, 4, 5, 7
C05079	8:45pm	9:35pm	3, 6
NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN			
DL298	10:25am	3:00pm	Daily
DL288	8:40pm	1:15am+1	Daily
DL286	7:40pm	12:20am+1	2, 4, 6, 7
OSAKA (KIX)-SAIPAN			
OZ120	9:50pm	2:20am+1	Daily
SEOUL (ICN)-SAIPAN			
OZ603	9:00am	2:20pm	Daily
OZ120	7:10pm	2:20am+1	Daily via KIX
OZ605	7:40pm	1:00am+1	7
OZ605	8:10pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN			
OZ607	9:00pm	2:20am+1	3, 6
DL580	10:10pm	2:55am+1	4, 7
GUANZHOU (CAN)-SAIPAN			
3U8645	7:40pm	3:00am+1	1, 5
SHANGHAI (PVG)-SAIPAN			
3U8647	10:40pm	5:00am+1	3, 4, 6, 7
MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN			
DL172/288	8:00am	1:15am+1	Daily via NRT
C0190/5077	10:55am	6:30pm	3, 6 via GUM
C0190/5079	10:55am	9:35pm	3, 6 via GUM
OZ702/605	12:30pm	1:00am+1	7 via ICN
OZ702/605	12:30pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
PR110/C05071	10:15pm	7:50am+1	1, 3, 5, 6, 7 via GUM
C0192/5071	10:25pm	7:50am+1	2, 5 via GUM-Palau
C0184/5071	11:10pm	7:50am+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
OZ704/603	11:40pm	2:20pm	Daily via ICN
C0184/5071	11:59pm	7:50am+1	2, 5 via GUM
HONG KONG (HKG)-SAIPAN			
OZ724/603	12:30am	2:20pm	Daily via ICN
OZ750/603	1:00am	2:20pm	Daily via ICN
OZ722/605	1:15pm	1:00am+1	7 via ICN
OZ722/605	1:15pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
C0180/5071	11:15pm	7:50am+1	1, 5 via GUM

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); 5K: FlyGuam; 3U: Sichuan Airlines; CZ: China Southern; CO: Continental; DL: Delta Airlines; OZ: Asiana

ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The *Saipan Tribune* is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)

FREEDOM AIR FLIGHT SCHEDULE

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
Guam–Rota			
FRE 100	7:30	8:00	Daily
Rota–Saipan			
FRE 100	8:20	8:50	Daily
Guam–Rota			
FRE 300	17:00	17:30	Daily
Rota–Saipan	17:50	18:20	Daily
Saipan–Rota			
FRE 200	9:30	10:00	Daily
Rota–Guam	10:20	10:45	Daily
Saipan–Rota			
FRE 400	18:55	19:25	Daily
Rota–Guam			
FRE 400	19:40	20:10	Daily
Saipan–Tinian			
FRE 101	6:45	6:55	Daily
FRE 103	7:30	7:40	Daily
FRE 105	8:00	8:10	Daily
FRE 107	8:40	8:50	Daily
FRE 109	9:10	9:20	Daily
FRE 111	10:45	10:55	Daily

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
FRE 115	13:00	13:10	Daily
FRE 117	14:30	14:40	Daily
FRE 119	16:00	16:10	Daily
FRE 121	16:40	16:50	Daily
FRE 123	17:40	17:50	Daily
FRE 125	18:30	18:40	Daily
Tinian–Saipan			
FRE 102	7:05	7:15	Daily
FRE 104	7:50	8:00	Daily
FRE 106	8:20	8:30	Daily
FRE 108	9:00	9:10	Daily
FRE 110	10:00	10:10	Daily
FRE 112	11:05	11:15	Daily
FRE 114	12:00	12:10	Daily
FRE 116	13:30	13:40	Daily
FRE 118	14:50	15:00	Daily
FRE 120	16:20	16:30	Daily
FRE 122	17:00	17:10	Daily
FRE 124	18:05	18:15	Daily
FRE 126	18:50	19:00	Daily

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- BIRTHDAY GREETINGS
  A way for families and friends to greet their loved ones, accompanied by a picture of the person celebrating his/her birthday.
- BUSINESS
  Corporate donations, volunteer work, promotions, granting of awards, team-building exercises, meetings and other activities by members of the business community.
- SAMU'T SARI
  Pictures from the islands' Filipino community, primarily focusing on Filipino activities, gatherings, get-togethers, volunteer work, etc.
- TRAVELOGUE
  Pictures of off-island travels. Contributors may submit up to 10 pictures for consideration.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- COMMUNITY BRIEFS
  Announcements of upcoming activities of organizations, community clubs, government agencies, and private companies.
- CAMPUS BULLETIN
  Announcements of upcoming activities in public and private schools, as well as calendar of activities. May include PTSA meetings, enrollment procedures.

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- Photos should be original and not copyrighted. Contributors must have the right to allow the *Saipan Tribune* to publish the pictures.
- Digital pictures should be high-resolution (minimum of 800kb).
- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and phone number.
- Photos must have been taken in the last two months.
- For birthday greetings, must be submitted no later than 12 noon of the previous day to make it to next day's edition.

For announcements:

- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and a phone number.
- Must be submitted no later than 12 noon to make it to next day's edition.

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Business

Long political fights ahead over dueling tax plans

WASHINGTON (AP)—Democrats and Republicans are forcing votes in Congress this coming week on competing tax plans that affect millionaires and smaller businesses, and they know the proposals are doomed from the start.

But that doesn't matter to either party.

Their efforts, including a Senate vote Monday on President Barack Obama's "Buffett rule" proposal to impose a minimum tax on the wealthiest Americans, are more about pontificating than legislating, aimed at voters in November's congressional and presidential elections.

Neutral economists say neither bill would do much for the economy or job creation. Some political professionals are equally unimpressed with their potential impact on voters.

Undaunted, congressional leaders hope to maximize public attention by timing both roll calls with an eye to Tuesday, the annual deadline for filing income taxes with the Internal Revenue Service. The upcoming votes probably are just a start.

AP

In this Feb. 16, 2012, file photo Senate Finance Committee Chairman Sen. Max Baucus, D-Mont., left, reaches across the table to shake hands with Rep. Fred Upton, R-Mich., after bi-partisan House and Senate conferees signed a compromise agreement on the payroll tax cut extension.

Senate Democrats later this year may hold additional votes tied to the "Buffett rule," using his idea of a minimum 30 percent tax on top earners to raise money for proposal to create jobs and keep student loan rates from rising.

With trillions in tax cuts dating from President George W. Bush set to expire in January, House and Senate leaders also are considering campaign-season votes on extending popular parts of those reductions, such as preventing the $1,000 child tax credit from being cut in half.

In addition, Obama and his all-but-certain GOP opponent, Mitt Romney, will spend much of the campaign promoting their tax blueprints as antidotes to an economy still struggling to generate jobs.

Besides raising taxes on the wealthy, Obama would boost levies on many U.S. companies that do business overseas, and on the oil and gas industry. The new money would help lower individual and corporate rates and reduce federal deficits.

Romney would continue all Bush tax cuts, including those for the richest people, while trimming rates and eliminating estate taxes.

"If this were a heavyweight fight, we're still in the first round where both sides are kind of feeling each other out," Republican consultant Mike McKenna said about the votes in the week ahead.

On Monday, as Congress returns from a two-week spring break, the Democratic-led Senate expect votes on a "Buffett rule" measure by Sen. Sheldon Whitehouse, D-R.I. It would slap a minimum 30 percent income tax on people making over $2 million yearly and phase in higher taxes for those earning at least $1 million. Republicans are sure to block the bill, nicknamed for billionaire Warren Buffett, who backs higher taxes on the rich.

The GOP-run House plans a Thursday vote on legislation providing a 20 percent tax deduction for businesses that employ fewer than 500 workers, which covers 99.9 percent of all companies. The proposal, sponsored by House Majority Leader Eric Cantor, R-Va., seems certain to pass, but fail in the Senate.

Big gaps found in nursing homes' disaster plans

WASHINGTON (AP)—Tornado, hurricane or flood, nursing homes are woefully unprepared to protect frail residents in a natural disaster, government investigators say.

Emergency plans required by the government often lack specific steps such as coordinating with local authorities, notifying relatives or even pinning name tags and medication lists to residents in an evacuation, according to the findings.

That means the plans may not be worth the paper they're written on.

Nearly seven years after Hurricane Katrina's devastation of New Orleans exposed the vulnerability of nursing homes, serious shortcomings persist.

"We identified many of the same gaps in nursing home preparedness and response," investigators from the inspector general's office of the Health and Human Services Department wrote in the report being released Monday. "Emergency plans lacked relevant information. ... Nursing homes faced challenges with unreliable transportation contracts, lack of collaboration with local emergency management, and residents who developed health problems."

The report recommends that Medicare and Medicaid add specific emergency planning and training steps to the existing federal requirement that nursing homes have a disaster plan. Many such steps are now in nonbinding federal guidelines that investigators found were disregarded.

AP

In this Oct 23, 2005, file photo a wheelchair sits outside St. Rita's Nursing Home in St. Bernard's Parish, La., after Hurricane Katrina.

In a written response, Medicare chief Marilyn Tavenner agreed with the recommendation, but gave no timetable for carrying it out.

Nationally, more than 3 million people spent at least some time in a nursing home during 2009, according to the latest available data. Nearly 40 percent of them, 1.2 million, were in the top 10 disaster-prone states. The typical nursing home resident is a woman in her 80s or older, dealing with physical and mental limitations that leave her dependent on others for help with basic daily activities.

Investigators pursued a two-track approach. First they looked at the number of nursing homes that met federal regulations for emergency planning and training. Then they went into the field to test how solid those plans were, in a sample of homes drawn from 210 facilities substantially affected by floods, hurricanes and wildfires across seven states during 2007-2010.

On the surface, things appeared to be in good shape. Ninety-two percent of the nation's 16,000 nursing homes met federal regulations for emergency planning, while 72 percent met the standards for emergency training.

A different story emerged when inspectors showed up at 24 selected nursing homes and started pulling files and interviewing staff.

The specific facilities in California, Louisiana, Minnesota, North Carolina, North Dakota, Tennessee, and Texas were not identified in the report. All had been affected by disasters; 14 had evacuated and the remainder sheltered in place.

Geithner: Romney claim on job losses 'ridiculous'

WASHINGTON (AP)—Treasury Secretary Timothy Geithner says a claim by Mitt Romney about disproportionate job losses by women during the Obama administration is "misleading and ridiculous."

Romney said last week that 92.3 percent of jobs lost since President Barack Obama took office were held by women. He said the "real war on women is being waged by the president's failed economic policies."

While the statistic is accurate, the recession began 13 months before Obama took office. Men have lost more jobs overall during the downturn—3.4 million, compared with 1.8 million lost by women.

Geithner noted that manufacturing and construction job losses were heavy in the early days of the recession, while professions with more women, such as teaching, were hurt later.

Geithner spoke Sunday on CBS' "Face the Nation." He also appeared on the ABC and NBC Sunday interview programs. He took aim at Republican criticism of the administration's economic record, providing a preview of the line of attack the administration will pursue in the upcoming presidential campaign.

Geithner said many of the president's efforts to help the economy were strongly opposed by Republicans in Congress. Republicans opposed stimulus spending, bailouts of General Motors and Chrysler and the Dodd-Frank Act that overhauled financial regulations.

"If he'd had more support from his opponents in Congress, then we could have got more things passed that would have put more people back to work more quickly," Geithner said on ABC's "This Week with George Stephanopoulos."

Geithner was also critical of Republican efforts last summer to use the debate over raising the debt ceiling as leverage to force greater deficit reductions. He said that battle, by raising the possibility of a default on the nation's debt obligations, shook consumer and business confidence at a fragile time for the economy.

BUSINESS BRIEFS

Oil falls to near $102 after Iran nuclear talks

SINGAPORE (AP)—Oil fell to near $102 a barrel Monday in Asia after negotiators said meetings over Iran's nuclear program last weekend began on a positive note. Benchmark oil for May delivery was down 78 cents to $102.05 a barrel at midday Singapore time in electronic trading on the New York Mercantile Exchange. The contract fell 81 cents to settle at $102.83 in New York on Friday. Brent crude for May delivery was down 60 cents at $120.58 per barrel in London.

US home-buying season finally signaling a recovery

WASHINGTON (AP)—Five years after the U.S. housing bust sent sales and prices plunging, the spring home-buying season is pointing to a long-awaited recovery. Reduced prices, record-low mortgage rates, higher rents and an improving job market appear to be emboldening many would-be buyers. Open houses are drawing crowds. A wave of foreclosures is leading investors to grab bargain-priced homes. And many people seem to have concluded that prices won't drop much further. In some areas, prices have begun to tick up.

Church suspends Mass in Philippine mall over trees

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—Talk about divine punishment. The Roman Catholic Church in the northern Philippines has suspended Masses and blessings of shops and stalls inside a mall in Baguio city to protest a plan by the developer to uproot and remove nearly 200 trees from a popular urban forest. Masses are commonly held in Philippine malls. A court last week issued a temporary order stopping SM malls, one of the country's biggest chains, from uprooting the trees in Baguio. But it is unclear how long the order will hold. The mall wants to build an underground parking lot and promises to replant the trees elsewhere.

Nation

Women linked by Manson murders form odd friendship

CORCORAN, Calif. (AP)—On August 9, 1969, two naive 17-year-old girls were launched on a path that led to the unlikeliest of friendships.

That infamous night, four young people under the sway of a charismatic career criminal slipped into a neighborhood of Hollywood glitterati, then bludgeoned and stabbed rising young actress Sharon Tate, coffee heiress Abigail Folger and three others. Across town the next night, the band killed again.

The name Charles Manson quickly became a synonym for unimaginable evil, which nobody knows better than Debra Tate, Sharon's little sister, and Barbara Hoyt, the Manson family member whose testimony helped put the killers in prison.

"We've got a lot in common," said Hoyt, now a retired nurse. "She has been a big help to me."

"She makes sure I am holding my head up high," Tate said, "and I do the same for her."

Now both about 60, a Manson family member and the last living Tate family member have bonded in their long quest to keep those responsible behind bars. Both have testified repeatedly at Manson's parole hearings. Both say they still get threats from the cult killer's supporters—mostly white supremacists enamored with murders Manson orchestrated to incite a race war dubbed "Helter Skelter."

Even now not a day passes without Hoyt dwelling on the suffering Manson and her former comrades inflicted and on the widespread terror that ensued.

"We are completely linked by this event whether we want to be or not," she said of Debra Tate, who now runs a crime victims group. "She understands me, and I understand where she's coming from."

AP

In this Sept. 23, 1970 file photo, Barbara Hoyt, 19, former member of Charles Manson's hippie "family" arrives at court to testify as a prosecution witness in the Tate-La Bianca murder trial in Los Angeles. On Aug. 9, 1969, two naive 17-year-olds were launched on a path toward the most unlikely of friendships.

Hoyt never committed a crime for Manson, and her testimony helped send the cult leader and four followers to death row in 1971. The following year, when the California Supreme Court ruled the death penalty unconstitutional, their new life terms made them eligible for a while for annual parole consideration.

That is when the lives of Barbara Hoyt and Debra Tate began to intertwine. Over the decades, each has written letters to parole panels urging that the killers never be released, and each has traveled to obscure California farming towns for parole hearings in prisons housing some of the state's most notorious convicts.

At first Hoyt testified partly out of fear that the killers would seek revenge if released. But after becoming a registered nurse, she realized that the psychological and emotional pain of having to relive her involvement with the cult was another part of her payback to society.

"It's a descent into hell and then having to climb back out again," Hoyt said. "I think about it and I feel I was simply there to be a witness, because that has been my role. God gave me that role, and that's my reality."

Meanwhile Tate's late mother, Doris, had become the driving force for victims' rights in California and was instrumental in a 1982 law that allows family members to testify about their losses at trials and parole hearings.

When Doris died, that left her daughters Debra and Patti to carry on with her work. Patti died of breast cancer in 2000, leaving Debra, disabled from a postal service accident, to go it alone.

"Over time our mutual efforts brought us together," Hoyt said.

Now they talk regularly on the phone and get together when they're in the same town, usually for a parole hearing. Tate lives in the Southern California desert, and Hoyt in the Pacific Northwest, the specific location she wants to keep secret.

Trapped in drab institutional waiting rooms, they realized they were the same age and shared similar middle-class upbringings. Both were divorced mothers who raised daughters on their own. In 2006, when Manson associate Bruce Davis was up for parole for another murder Manson had orchestrated, the two had time to talk.

"I discovered that I really like Barbara," said Tate, who now works for victims' rights through her website http://www.sharontate.net . "She is a good person. She has a good soul and a good spirit and she has come through for us when it was very iffy whether these core members were going to get out."

As the friendship developed, Tate realized that Barbara has suffered from the murders as much as she had. "She flew under such a horrible social stigma for so long," Tate said. "For Barbara to have suffered the same stigma as those other sociopaths, well it just wasn't right."

Hoyt didn't appear Wednesday for the 77-year-old Manson's 12th and probably final parole hearing because she knew the prospects were virtually nil that the state would release such a notorious killer.

Don't wait for Social Security check in the mail

WASHINGTON (AP)—Starting next year, the check will no longer be in the mail for millions of people who receive Social Security and other government benefits.

The federal government, which issues 73 million payments a month, is phasing out paper checks for all benefit programs, requiring people to get payments electronically, either through direct deposit or a debit card for those without a bank account.

The changes will affect people who get Social Security, veterans' benefits, railroad pensions and federal disability payments. Tax refunds are exempt, but the Internal Revenue Service encourages taxpayers to get refunds electronically by processing those refunds faster than paper checks.

About 90 percent of people who receive federal benefits already get their payments electronically, the Treasury Department says. New beneficiaries were required to get payments electronically starting last year, and with a few exceptions, the rest will have to make the switch by March 2013.

"It's just that natural progression of moving to how people are used to receiving their funds," said Walt Henderson, director of the Treasury Department's electronic funds transfer division.

Henderson said electronic payments are safer and more efficient than paper checks; in 2010, more than 540,000 federal benefit checks were reported lost or stolen. The switch will save the government about $120 million a year. Social Security will save $1 billion over the next decade, according to the Treasury Department.

"You think of that paper check floating out there in the delivery system, with personal information on it, it's much more susceptible to fraud versus an electronic payment," Henderson said.

Advocates for seniors say they understand the government's desire to cut costs and take advantage of technologies that most workers already use. The food stamp program switched from paper coupons to debit cards in 2004.

But they have raised concerns about requiring the switch for older retirees who may not be used to electronic payments.

"This will affect some very frail elderly people who are living by themselves, many of them, and doing well, but usually within the context of that old paper check that they deposit in the bank," said Web Phillips, a senior policy advisor for the National Committee to Protect Social Security and Medicare.

"The change has to be handled carefully and with a lot of sensitivity so that there aren't people who lose track of a payment or don't understand that they have a card that came in the mail that's the source of their payment," Phillips said. "That's our concern."

The switch is mandated by a Treasury rule issued in December 2010. Since then, the department has worked to educate the public. The government has created a website, www.GoDirect.org and a toll-free phone number, 1-800-333-1795, people can call for assistance.

"Treasury acknowledges they have a lot of education to do for people about how these things work," said David Certner, legislative policy director for AARP. "We're a bit concerned about how easy it's going to be to provide education, particularly for some in this older population who are not familiar with debit cards and don't have bank accounts."

Midwest towns say early storm warnings saved lives

WOODWARD, Okla. (AP)—The television was tuned to forecasters' dire warnings of an impending storm when Greg Tomlyanobich heard a short burst from a tornado siren blare after midnight Sunday. Then silence. Then rumbling.

The 52-year-old quickly grabbed his wife and grandson, hurrying them into the emergency cellar as debris whirled around their heads at their mobile home park in northwest Oklahoma. They huddled inside with about 20 other people before the tornado—among dozens that swept across the nation's midsection during the weekend—roared across the ground above, ripping homes from their foundations.

"It scared the hell out of me," Tomlyanobich said.

The storm killed five people, including three children, and injured more than two dozen in Woodward, a town about 140 miles northwest of Oklahoma City. But it was the only tornado that caused fatalities. Many of the touchdowns raked harmlessly across isolated stretches of rural Kansas, and though communities there and in Iowa were hit, residents and officials credited days of urgent warnings from forecasters for saving lives.

When Tomlyanobich emerged from the underground shelter after the storm subsided, he saw a scattered trail of destruction: home insulation, siding and splintered wood where homes once stood; trees stripped of leaves, clothing and metal precariously hanging from limbs.

"It just makes you sick to your stomach. Just look at that mangled steel," he said Sunday, pointing to what appeared to be a giant twisted steel frame that had landed in the middle of the mobile home park, which is surrounded by rural land dotted with oil field equipment.

The storms were part of an exceptionally strong system tracked by the National Weather Service's Storm Prediction Center in Norman, Okla., which specializes in tornado forecasting. The center took the unusual step of warning people more than 24 hours in advance of a possible "high-end, life-threatening event."

Center spokesman Chris Vaccaro said the weather service received at least 120 reports of tornadoes by dawn Sunday and was working to confirm how many actually touched down.

ACROSS THE NATION

Obama: US has offered no 'freebies' to Iran

CARTAGENA, Colombia (AP)—Exposing a rift with Israel, President Barack Obama on Sunday insisted that the U.S. had not "given anything away" in new talks with Iran and defended his administration's continued push for a diplomatic resolution to the dispute over Tehran's nuclear ambitions. Obama said that while he refused to let the nuclear negotiations turn into a "stalling process", he was willing to see if Iran was negotiating in good faith. Earlier Sunday, Israel Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu disagreed with that strategy, saying the U.S. and world powers gave Tehran a "freebie" by agreeing to hold more talks next month. "So far at least we haven't given away anything, other than the opportunity for us to negotiate and see if Iran comes to the table in good faith," Obama said during a news conference Sunday in Colombia, as he wrapped up a diplomatic mission to Latin America.

Couple died in mall murder-suicide, girl survived

SAN JOSE, Calif. (AP)—Police say two people found dead in an apparent murder-suicide at a Northern California strip mall parking lot were once a couple and that a toddler found nearby is their daughter. The 17-month-old girl was found inside a car near where her parents' bodies were found Saturday in the shopping center's parking lot in San Jose. Police said Sunday that the man walked up to the woman and fired a single shot into her head before turning the gun on himself. Authorities have not released the former couple's names, citing efforts to contact their next of kin, but said they were San Jose residents. The child was placed in the care of Santa Clara County Child Protective Services.

Asia

Afghan-led forces beat back brazen Taliban attack

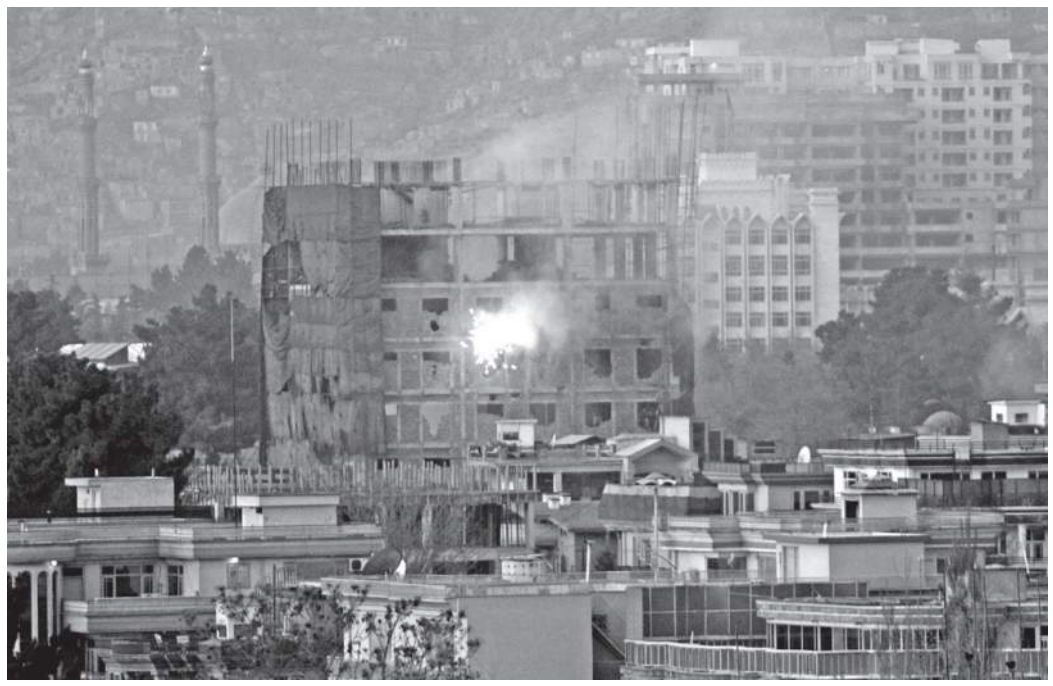
KABUL, Afghanistan (AP)—A brazen, 18-hour Taliban attack on the Afghan capital ended early Monday when insurgents who had holed up overnight in two buildings were overcome by heavy gunfire from Afghan-led forces and predawn air assaults from U.S.-led coalition helicopters.

Kabul residents awoke Monday to a second day of loud explosions and the crackle of gunfire. As darkness turned to dawn, Afghan-led forces fired one rocket-propelled grenade after another into a building in the center of the city where insurgents began their attack Sunday.

Fighting there and at the Afghan parliament building on the southwest side of the city ended just before 8 a.m.

Authorities said one police officer and at least 17 militants were killed in the multi-pronged attacks in Kabul and three eastern cities. The violence showed the Taliban and their allies are far from beaten and underscored the security challenge facing government forces as U.S. and NATO forces draw down. The majority of international combat troops are scheduled to leave by the end of 2014.

The Taliban began their near-simultaneous assaults on embassies, government buildings and NATO bases at 1:30 p.m. Sunday, saying it was their response to NATO officials' recent claims that the insurgency was weak.



AP

Gunfire and smoke is seen coming out of a building occupied by militants during a battle with Afghan-led forces, in Kabul, Afghanistan, Monday, April 16, 2012.

The U.S., German and British embassies and some coalition and Afghan government buildings took direct and indirect fire, according to Lt. Col. Jimmie Cummings, a spokesman for the U.S.-led coalition.

Local residents near the parliament building said rocket-propelled grenades and gunfire rocked their neighborhood through the night and into the morning.

Afghan Interior Ministry spokesman Sediq Sediqi said militants took up position in a building under construction near parliament. Some lawmakers grabbed weapons and started fighting when militants fired on the parliament building on Sunday.

Reporters for The Associated Press witnessed the Monday morning assault on another building under construction near the presidential palace, western embassies and Afghan ministries.

Shortly before 3 a.m., coalition helicopters began flying over the building. At 4:23 a.m. a religious cleric began calling Muslim worshippers to prayer over a loudspeaker in the area. During the next 15 minutes, troops launched five rocket-propelled grenades into the building. More followed.

The loud booms from the blasts momentarily silenced chirping birds. Red and white flashes could be seen inside the various floors of the multistory building. By about 6:30 a.m., the blasts and shooting had stopped.

An intelligence official, speaking on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to speak to the news media, said an operation to clear the building was nearly completed. The official said one insurgent was still defending the building, but that at least four other militants had been killed.

The first explosions on Sunday rocked the diplomatic quarter of Kabul. Soon gunshots and rocket-propelled grenade fire were ringing out across the city. Smoke rose over the skyline as sirens wailed. A loudspeaker at the U.S. Embassy could be heard barking: "Duck and cover. Move away from the windows."

It was the most widespread attack in the Afghan capital since an assault on the U.S. Embassy and NATO headquarters last September blamed on the Haqqani network, a Pakistan-based insurgent group allied with the Taliban. Explosions and the crackle of gunfire could be heard throughout the night.

The sophistication and firepower of the latest strikes, as well as the high-profile government and foreign targets, bore the hallmarks of the attack last fall and others carried out by Haqqani insurgents.

Ex-Thai PM Thaksin plans early return from exile

BANGKOK (AP)—Exiled former Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra celebrated Thailand's most important holiday in neighboring Cambodia this weekend, telling thousands of fervent supporters who crossed the border to meet him that he intends to return home soon on his own terms.

Thaksin, ousted by a 2006 military coup after being accused of abuse of power and disrespect for the monarchy, led a song-filled rally to mark Songkran, the Thai New Year. Between appearances on stage, he worked the crowd in a manner recalling his past political campaigning.

Thaksin, 62, has been living overseas since jumping bail in 2008 to avoid a two-year jail term on a corruption conviction he says was politically motivated. Saturday's event, just a few hours' drive from northeastern Thailand, raises the question: Will he be celebrating the next Songkran at home?

Thaksin—by far Thailand's most divisive politician—has said in the last few days that his return will be "in the next three to four months," "not so long," and when "everything is stable."

He sang several popular songs during his appearance Saturday, with lyrics changed to stress his homesickness or urge his supporters to support his younger sister Yingluck, the current prime minister. He added a strikingly off-key rendition of "My Way," which segued oddly into "Let It Be."

Thaksin also visited Laos, another neighbor, as part of his well-publicized Songkran tour. Since the beginning of the year, he has visited all four of Thailand's immediate neighbors—including Myanmar and Malaysia—suggesting, symbolically at least, that he is closing on his goal.

After fleeing Thailand, he based himself in Dubai and fostered a pro-Thaksin "Red Shirt" movement, a counterweight to a "Yellow Shirt" royalist group whose 2006 street demonstrations paved the way for his ouster.

In 2009, he openly backed Red Shirt rioting against an anti-Thaksin government led by the Democrat Party, and in 2010 more discreetly encouraged vastly more disruptive Bangkok street demonstrations that resulted in the worst political violence in decades, including the deaths of 91 people over two months.

Thaksin's battles at the polls have been more fruitful. Pro-Thaksin parties won convincing victories in all four general elections since 2001—five if an invalidated poll in 2006 is counted.

With his sister now prime minister and his allies holding a firm majority in Parliament, Thaksin's prospects appear good. But his 2006 ouster—after becoming the first prime minister ever to complete a four-year term, and then being re-elected by an unprecedented majority—is a reminder that he still has powerful enemies.

He has been accused of arrogance, failure to separate his business interests from affairs of state, and intolerance of criticism. But many believe he was ousted because his popularity was a threat to the traditional ruling groups—led by an army-palace axis—who feared he wanted to usurp their power. The monarchy was seen as particularly vulnerable because beloved King Bhumibol Adulyadej is entering his twilight years.

Post-coup court rulings banning Thaksin's allies from politics and a constitutional revision to weaken political parties failed to dent his popularity.

"The harsh reality is that he wins elections every time," said Thitinan Pongsudhirak, a political scientist at Bangkok's Chulalongkorn University. Instead, the prestige and influence of the army and the palace have declined, dragged down by an antidemocratic tinge.

This weekend's Songkran rally is a reminder of Thaksin's continued electoral potency and places more pressure on his opponents, Thitinan said.

PH president: No war with China over shoal

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—The Philippine president says his Southeast Asian nation won't start a war with China over a disputed shoal where their ships have figured in a tense naval standoff for a week.

President Benigno Aquino III said Monday his country would assert its sovereignty over the Scarborough Shoal off the northwestern Philippines but has pulled out a warship and replaced it with a coast guard vessel to "de-escalate the situation."

■ ■ ■

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—U.S. and Philippine military officials say nearly 7,000 American and Filipino troops have begun two weeks of major military exercises but they stress that China is not an imaginary target.

Philippine army Maj. Emmanuel Garcia said Monday that the annual drills, called Balikatan or shoulder-to-shoulder, will include combat maneuvers involving the mock retaking by U.S.-backed Filipino troops of an oil rig supposedly seized by terrorists near the South China Sea.

U.S. Marine Lt. Col. Curtis Hill says most other events will focus on humanitarian missions and disaster-response drills.

Beijing has protested military drills involving Americans near the South China Sea, where it is locked with the Philippines and four other nations in territorial rifts.

■ ■ ■

Aquino says the Philippines will continue talks with China to resolve the impasse, which began last Tuesday when two Chinese ships prevented a Philippine warship from arresting several Chinese fishermen.

Aquino, quoting the late British Prime Minister Winston Churchill, said: "It's better to jaw, jaw, jaw than to war, war, war."

ASIAN BRIEFS

Flooding in 2 Chinese coal mines kills at least 15

BEIJING (AP)—Flooding in two Chinese coal mines has killed at least 15 miners. State television and the official Xinhua News Agency say at least 10 miners were killed in a mine in the northern province of Shanxi. The fate of one missing miner was unknown following the flood Friday morning. Sunday's reports said at least five miners were killed in an unrelated underground flood in a mine Saturday in the central province of Henan. Xinhua said an unknown number of other miners might be missing. China's coal mines are among the world's deadliest and suffer chronic explosions, cave-ins and flooding. Repeated safety crackdowns have lowered the death rate, but hundreds of fatalities still are reported every year.

Filipino activists deface entrance of US Embassy

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—Left-wing protesters in the Philippines have splattered paint on the seal of the U.S. Embassy to demand a pullout of American troops taking part in annual war games. About 70 student activists took police and embassy guards by surprise early Monday when they threw blue-and-red paint at the seaside mission's main gate and scrawled "U.S. troops out now." They also chipped away letters from the bronze signage and burned a mock American flag. No arrests were made as protesters outnumbered police and later walked away.

Cardboard cathedral planned in New Zealand

WELLINGTON, New Zealand (AP)—The world's great cathedrals are known for their architectural statements: flying buttresses, soaring domes, Gothic grandeur. Not for their cardboard. In the city of Christchurch, Anglican leaders are hoping to change that. On Monday, they announced plans to build a soaring 25-meter (82-foot) high cathedral with 104 tubes of cardboard as a temporary replacement for the iconic stone ChristChurch Cathedral, which was destroyed last year in an earthquake that killed 185 people. The temporary cathedral will cost about 5 million New Zealand dollars ($4.1 million). It will include traditional structural materials like concrete and steel, as well as a polycarbonate roof. The Rev. Craig Dixon said it will be weatherproof and fire-resistant.

World

Truce eroding as first UN monitors head to Syria

BEIRUT (AP)—Syria's 4-day-old cease-fire appeared to be quickly eroding Sunday, with regime forces firing dozens of tank shells and mortar rounds at neighborhoods in the opposition stronghold of Homs, hours before the arrival of a first team of U.N. truce monitors. Even though the overall level of violence has dropped, escalating regime attacks over the weekend raised new doubts about President Bashar Assad's commitment to a plan by special envoy Kofi Annan to end 13 months of violence and launch talks on Syria's political future.

Assad accepted the truce deal at the prodding of his main ally, Russia, but his compliance has been limited. He has halted shelling of rebel-held neighborhoods, with the exception of Homs, but ignored calls to pull troops out of urban centers, apparently for fear of losing control over a country his family has ruled for four decades. Rebel fighters have also kept up attacks, including shooting ambushes.

The international community hopes U.N. observers will be able to stabilize the cease-fire, which formally took effect Thursday. A six-member advance team of U.N. observers headed to Damascus on Sunday, a day after an unanimous U.N. Security Council approved such a mission. A larger team of 250 observers requires more negotiations between the U.N. and the Syrian government next week.

With Assad seen as a reluctant participant in Annan's plan, the observers' success will depend on how much access they can negotiate in Syria and how quickly the team can grow to a full contingent, analysts said.

The Security Council demanded freedom of movement for the U.N. team, but the regime could try to create obstacles; the failure of an Arab League observer mission earlier this year was blamed in part on regime restrictions imposed on the visitors.

"This will be a serious cat-and-mouse game between the government and the U.N. for weeks to come," George Lopez, a professor of peace studies at the University of Notre Dame in Indiana said of the new observer mission. Buying time is in Assad's interest, he said.

However, a reassuring presence of monitors could also enable Syria's opposition to return to staging mass marches, common in the early days of the anti-Assad uprising that erupted in March 2011. In response to a violent regime crackdown on such protests, the turnout for weekly anti-regime marches has decreased. The opposition resorted more and more to armed attacks in recent months. By returning to peaceful protests, it would be able to regain some of the moral high ground it lost as the conflict became increasingly violent.

Since the cease-fire began, each side has accused the other of violations.

Syria's state-run news agency SANA has reported rebel attacks targeting checkpoints and army officers, while opposition activists said regime troops and their allied Shabiha militiamen continued arrest raids and mistreatment of those in detention.

The city of Homs, Syria's third-largest, was the main flashpoint of violence again Sunday. The city had been battered by daily regime shelling for three weeks before the cease-fire, and shelling resumed late Friday, less than 48 hours after the truce took effect, residents said.

"What cease-fire? There's an explosion every five to six minutes," a Homs-based activist, identified only as Yazan, said via Skype.

The Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said two men and a woman were killed by shelling in Homs on Sunday, and that three more bodies were found in the city. Rami Abdul-Rahman, head of the group, said Sunday's shelling was more intense than the attacks of the previous day.

Another activist group, the Local Coordination Committees, put the death toll in Homs at 11. It said the day started with a barrage of shells that fell at the rate of six each minute, shaking the neighborhood of Khaldiyeh for the second consecutive day.

AP

In this image made from amateur video released by the Shaam News Network and accessed Sunday, April 15, 2012, smoke rises from buildings across the city following purported shelling in Homs, Syria.

Egypt's Islamists set back in presidential race

CAIRO (AP)—The elimination of three of the main contenders from Egypt's presidential race has eroded the chances of an Islamist candidate to seize the country's top job.

The Muslim Brotherhood, the most powerful political group to emerge from last year's uprising, finds itself increasingly in a bind. It is unable to exercise the power of its electoral wins so far and is jostling with the ruling generals and liberal and secular groups that drove the uprising but now fear religious domination of politics.

The Brotherhood was outraged over the election commission's decision late Saturday to bar its chief strategist and leading choice for president, Khairat el-Shater. It threatened more protests like a large march on Friday that drew tens of thousands of Islamists to Cairo's Tahrir Square.

"This is a political decision not a legal one, said Murad Mohammed Ali, a spokesman for el-Shater's campaign. "This commission is politicized and we will exert all political pressures to restore our rights."

The election commission disqualified 10 candidates from the May 23-24 vote including el-Shater and a popular, more hardline Islamist from another party, Hazem Abu Ismail. Omar Suleiman, who was ousted President Hosni Mubarak's long-time spy chief and only vice president, was also barred. He was believed to have been backed by the ruling military council that took power after Mubarak's ouster and is headed by Mubarak's long-time defense minister.

The shakeout left three front-runners and two of them are stiff competitors of the Muslim Brotherhood—former Foreign Minister Amr Moussa and a prominent Brotherhood defector, Abdel-Moneim Abolfotoh. The other front-runner is the Brotherhood's second choice for the presidency, Mohammed Morsi, who was nominated as a back-up in case el-Shater got eliminated.

The Brotherhood is also suffering from a public backlash over its decision to field a presidential candidate after promising it would not do so. Critics say the group has gotten too greedy for power and Suleiman, in the opening salvo of his campaign, warned the Brotherhood was trying to turn Egypt into a religious state.

The Brotherhood-led parliament that emerged from the pro-democracy uprising has passed only one law in its first few months in power and has failed in its bid to fire the military-appointed government it has blamed for depleting the country's coffers.

Last week, a court ruling suspended the constitution-writing panel appointed by parliament and dominated by Islamist parliament members after secular groups complained it was not representative.

Iran, Western powers hail latest nuclear talks

ISTANBUL (AP)—In a rare show of unity, Iran and the world's big powers on Saturday hailed their first nuclear meeting in more than a year as a key step toward further negotiations meant to ease international fears that Tehran may weaponize its nuclear program.

The one concrete reflection of progress was an agreement to meet again on May 23 in Baghdad, a venue put forward by Iran.

But huge hurdles still lie in the way of a common understanding of what Iran should do to end suspicions of its nuclear activities. Those barriers may prove insurmountable considering the differences between Tehran and the six nations trying to persuade it to compromise on its nuclear efforts.

Since revelations surfaced 10 years ago that it was secretly building a uranium enrichment program, Tehran has argued it has a right to enrichment to create reactor fuel under the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, and insisted it will never use that ability to create the fissile core of a nuclear warhead.

But the United States and other countries accuse Iran of repeatedly violating the treaty, and Tehran continues to expand enrichment despite four sets of U.N. Security Council resolutions and other penalties imposed by the U.S., Europe and others. Adding to concerns, it now is enriching uranium to levels closer to the grade needed for nuclear weapons in an underground bunker that could be impervious to attack.

The talks in Istanbul on Saturday saw the United States, Russia, China, Britain, France and Germany sitting at the same table with Iran. Knowing the road ahead is tough, both sides focused on what they said was the positive tone of the talks, in contrast to the previous round 14 months ago.

That last session broke up with no progress after Iranian negotiators refused to even consider discussing enrichment

EU foreign policy chief Catherine Ashton, who formally led the talks on behalf of the six powers, called the meeting "constructive and useful."

She expressed the hope they will lead to "a sustained process of serious dialogue, where we can take urgent practical steps to build confidence and lead on to compliance by Iran with all its international obligations."

Iranian chief negotiator Saeed Jalili said the talks made "some progress." But he acknowledged "some points of difference."

"What we saw today in the talks was the interest of the other party in the talks and cooperation, which is considered positive," he told reporters.

In London, British Foreign Secretary William Hague said the talks were "the first steps" toward the six-nation push to find "a peaceful, negotiated solution to the (Iran) nuclear issue."

"Today's talks were a first step towards that objective, but there is still a long way to go."

Both Jalili and Ashton said there was agreement to move slowly and be guided by reciprocity—meaning that Iran stood to benefit from easing fears about its enrichment program by unspecified rewards from the other side.

Iran hopes those rewards could include easing or delaying sanctions that target its main cash cow, its oil sales. Jalili acknowledged Saturday that Iran would like to avoid those penalties.

"The lifting sanctions is one of the demands by Iranian nation," Jalili told reporters.

But a senior U.S. administration official who demanded anonymity in exchange for discussing strategy at upcoming talks said that was not on the table in the near future.

"One only expects to look at the issue when there are sufficient concrete steps taken" by Iran, she said at a post-negotiation briefing. "Dialogue is not sufficient for any sanctions relief."

WORLD BRIEFS

Cuba split leaves summit without declaration

CARTAGENA, Colombia (AP)—A summit of nearly 30 Western Hemisphere leaders has ended without a joint declaration due to divisions over Cuba and Argentine claims to the Falkland Islands. "There is no declaration because there is no consensus," said Colombian President Juan Manuel Santos as the summit's closing news conference. Washington, backed by Canada, stood fast against widespread demands to include in the meeting's final declaration language specifying that Cuba be included in future hemispheric summits. They had also balked at backing Argentina's claims to the British-held Falkland Islands.

Israel nabs fly-in activists at airport

JERUSALEM (AP)—Israel detained dozens of international activists as they landed at its main airport on Sunday, preventing them from entering the country to participate in a planned solidarity mission with Palestinians in the West Bank. Israel said the activists, part of an umbrella group called "Welcome to Palestine," were provocateurs who posed a security threat. But organizers said the event, meant to draw attention to Israeli travel restrictions on Palestinians, was nonviolent, and they accused Israel of using heavy-handed tactics to stamp out legitimate protest. Israel is jittery about the prospect of a large influx of foreign protesters arriving because of deadly confrontations with pro-Palestinian activists in the past. In the worst instance, Israeli naval commandos clashed with activists on board a flotilla trying to break Israel's blockade of the Gaza Strip in May 2010, killing nine activists.

Focus

Titanic's sinking: Was it more than human folly

WASHINGTON (AP)—After an entire century that included two high-profile government investigations and countless books and movies, we're still debating what really caused the *Titanic* to hit an iceberg and sink on that crystal-clear chilly night.

Maybe there's more to blame than human folly and hubris. Maybe we can fault freak atmospheric conditions that caused a mirage or an even rarer astronomical event that sent icebergs into shipping lanes. Those are two of the newer theories being proposed by a *Titanic* author and a team of astronomers.

But the effort to find natural causes that could have contributed to the sinking may also be a quest for an excuse—anything to avoid gazing critically into a mirror, say disaster experts and *Titanic* historians.

New theories and research are important "but at its most basic what happened is they failed to heed warnings and they hit the iceberg because they were going too fast," said James Delgado, director of maritime heritage at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

With last week's 100th anniversary of *Titanic*'s sinking, the interest in all things *Titanic* is steaming faster than the doomed cruise ship on its maiden voyage.

One of the novel new theories says *Titanic* could have been the victim of a mirage that is similar to what people see in the desert. It's the brainchild of Tim Maltin, a historian who has written three books about *Titanic*. The latest, an e-book titled *A Very Deceiving Night* emphasizes how the atmosphere may have tricked the *Titanic* crew on a cloudless night.

"This was not avoidable human error," Maltin said in a telephone interview from London. "It's just about air density difference."

It was a beautiful clear night and for a couple of days, there had been something strange going on in the air over the North Atlantic, reported by all sorts of ships, including the crew on *Titanic*, Maltin said.

The unusually cold sea air caused light to bend abnormally downward, Maltin said. The *Titanic*'s first officer, William McMaster Murdoch, saw what he described as a "haze on the horizon, and that iceberg came right out of the haze," Maltin said, quoting from the surviving second officer's testimony. Other ships, including those rescuing survivors, reported similar strange visuals and had trouble navigating around the icebergs, he said.

British meteorologists later monitored the site for those freaky thermal inversions and said 60 percent of the time they checked, the inversions were present, Maltin said.

The same inversions could have made the *Titanic*'s rescue rockets appear lower in the sky, giving a rescue ship the impression that the *Titanic* was smaller and farther away, Maltin said.

Physicists Donald Olson and Russell Doescher at Texas State University have another theory in *Sky & Telescope* magazine that fits nicely with Maltin's. Olson—who often comes up with astronomical quirks linked to historical events—said that a few months earlier, the moon, sun and Earth lined up in a way that added extra pull on Earth's tides. The Earth was closer to the moon than it had been in 1,400 years.

They based their work on historical and astronomical records and research in 1978 by a federal expert in tides.

The unusual tides caused glaciers to calve icebergs off Greenland. Those southbound icebergs got stuck near Labrador and Newfoundland but then slowly moved south again, floating into the shipping currents just in time to greet the *Titanic*, the astronomers theorized. Maltin said the icebergs also added a snaking river of super-cold water that magnified the mirage effect.

Tides and mirages may have happened, but blaming them for *Titanic*'s sinking "misses the boat," said Lee Clarke, a Rutgers University disaster expert and author of the book "Worst Cases."

"The basic facts of *Titanic* are not in dispute: The boat was going too fast in dangerous waters," Clarke said. If *Titanic* had stopped for the night because of ice like the British steamship *Californian* did, "tides and mirages wouldn't have mattered."

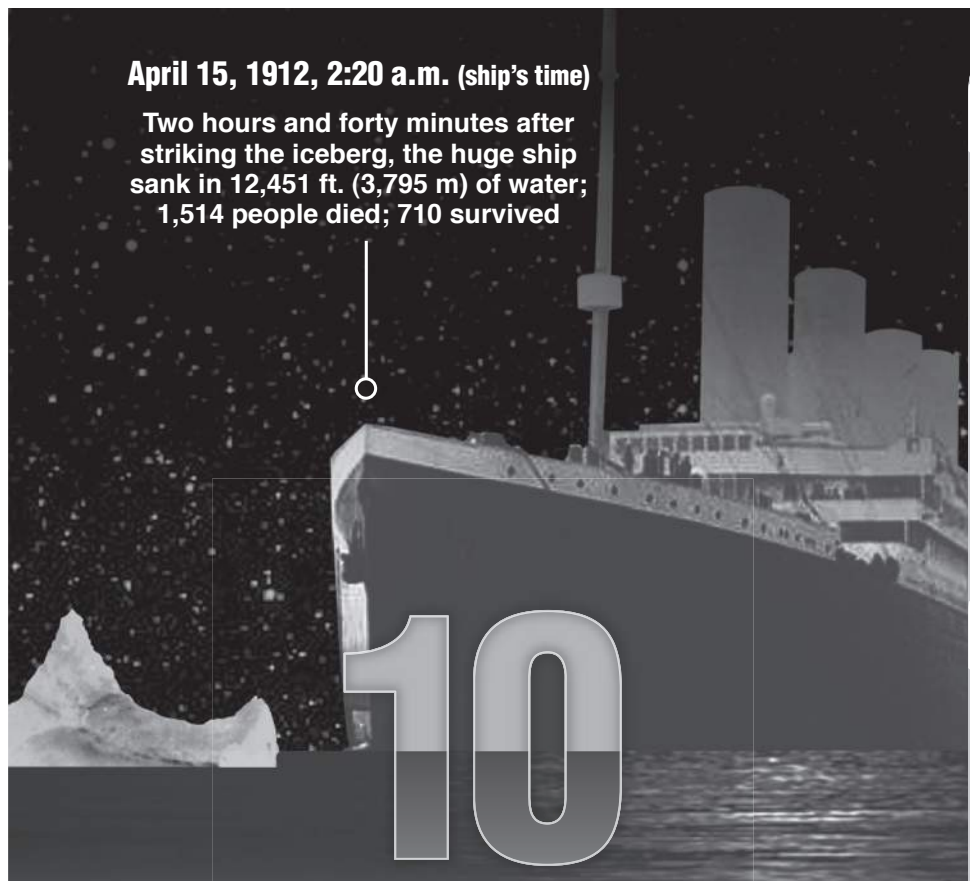
On April 14, the day it hit the iceberg, the *Titanic* received seven heavy ice warnings, including one from the *Californian* less than an hour before the fateful collision. The message said: "We are stopped and surrounded by ice." *Titanic* sent back a message that said "Shut up. We are busy."

Clarke said people keep looking for additional causes "because if it's nature or God, then we're off the hook, morally and practically."

Yale disaster expert Charles Perrow said he found the mirage theory plausible, especially because cold air played visual tricks that were a factor in a 1979 airplane crash in Antarctica that was originally blamed on pilot error.

Steven Biel, who wrote *Down with the Old Canoe: A Cultural History of the* Titanic *Disaster*, said he understands the search for other reasons.

"There's something appealing about retrospectively gaining control over an event that's centrally about uncertainty and contingency and lack of control," he said.


April 15, 1912, 2:20 a.m. (ship's time)
Two hours and forty minutes after striking the iceberg, the huge ship sank in 12,451 ft. (3,795 m) of water; 1,514 people died; 710 survived

10 Things that went wrong when the Titanic went down

April 14, 1912, 11:40 p.m. (ship's time)

The opulent pride of the White Star Line, RMS Titanic, on her maiden voyage from England to America, was steaming at an estimated 22 knots (25 mph, 41 kmph), when her starboard front flank ground jarringly against an iceberg that had drifted south. The "unsinkable" ship was instantly doomed. Looking at the tragic series of things that may have gone wrong:

1 Substandard rivets in bow

Later analysis showed the quality of the rivets holding hull plating together in the bow and stern was low; they were iron, with a high content of slag, which becomes brittle at very cold temperatures

2 Ship steaming too fast

Although repeatedly warned in telegraph messages from other ships about pack and berg ice in the area, Titanic steamed toward the collision at just less than her top speed

3 Lack of binoculars

Due to confusion in Southampton, some lookouts didn't have binoculars, although many experts doubt the quality of the optics of the time would have helped

4 Ice warnings disregarded

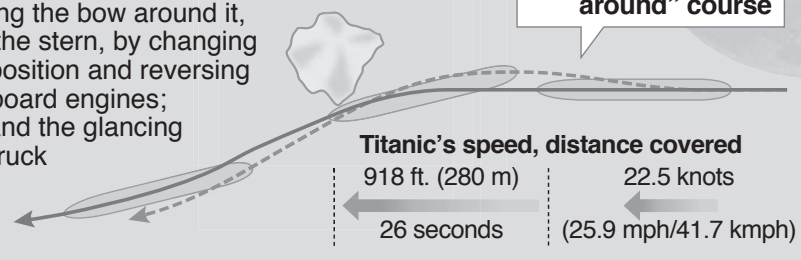
On the night of April 14, Titanic received six warnings from other ships, and ice had been seen earlier that day; Capt. Edward John Smith believed ice posed no serious risk to his huge ship

5 Strong tides lifted bergs

Unusually close approach by the moon on Jan. 4, 1912, may have caused very high tides, refloating icebergs grounded earlier in shallow waters near the Labrador and Newfoundland coasts, causing a glut of bergs in the shipping lanes into which Titanic steamed

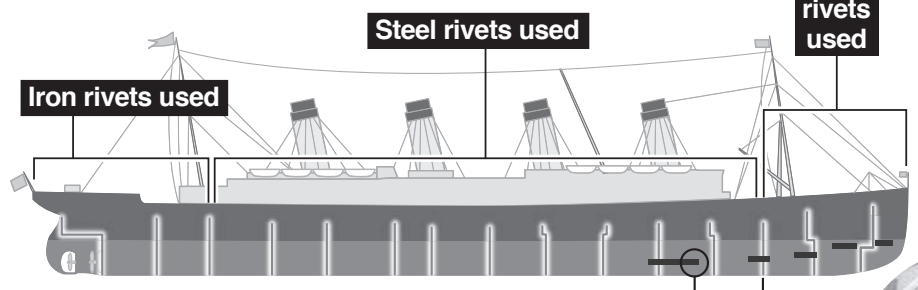
6 Last-minute maneuver failed

Rather than striking the berg head-on, which experts think would have caused less damage, First Officer William Murdoch tried to "port around" the berg, to swing the bow around it, then swing the stern, by changing the rudder position and reversing the two outboard engines; this failed, and the glancing blow was struck



7 Watertight bulkheads were not sealed at the top

Fifteen bulkheads running the width of Titanic divided its interior into 16 compartments, but although they extended well above water line, they were not sealed at the top



Seawater entered six compartments through gaps in starboard hull plates where rivets had popped; this led to more flooding than the ship's design could survive

8 Lifeboats

Titanic had 20 lifeboats, which could have held up to 1,178 people, only a third of those who were onboard (although this met the maritime rules of the day)

9 Boats not totally filled

Most of the lifeboats left the ship without being loaded to capacity; some were less than half-filled

10 Californian

The British steamer SS Californian is thought to have seen Titanic's distress rocket flares from about 10 mi. (16 km) away, but did not steam toward them

Source: Titanic Universe, National Geographic, Texas State University

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Graphic: Robert Dorrell

Overdrive

Chrysler brings back the sizzling SRT Viper

DETROIT (AP)—The SRT Viper is Chrysler's roar, a comeback car for a comeback company.

The 2013 Viper, introduced Wednesday at the New York Auto Show, is the fifth generation of the iconic two-seater, which first went on sale as the Dodge Viper in 1992. More important, it's the first Viper since Chrysler shut down production of the sports car in 2010. At that time, the company was emerging from bankruptcy protection and needed to focus on improving high volume, bread-and-butter products like the Sebring sedan and Jeep Grand Cherokee.

Ralph Gilles, the president and CEO of Chrysler's Street and Racing Technology team—or SRT—said uncertainty about the Viper's future was "gut-wrenching." The company decided to revive the Viper as its fortunes changed and sales rose. Chrysler earned $183 million last year, its first annual profit since 1997.

"The launch of the 2013 Viper proves that we simply would not let the performance icon of the Chrysler Group die," Gilles said in a statement.

The Viper, which is built by hand at a plant in Detroit, won't make a lot of money for Chrysler. The company sold just 1,172 Vipers in 2007, the year before the recession began. They cost around $90,000 then, and will likely top $100,000 when they go on sale later this year.

Instead, the Viper is a so-called halo car that shows what the company is capable of. It will also bring luster to Chrysler's other SRT offerings, including performance versions of the Chrysler 300 and the Dodge Challenger.

Here are more details about the car:

UNDER THE HOOD: The original Viper was among the first cars with a V-10 engine. The 8.4-liter V-10 is back, although this version is about 25 pounds lighter than the last one thanks to new materials. Chrysler expects it to get 640 horsepower and 600 pound-feet of torque. For comparison, the Chevrolet Corvette ZR1 gets 638 horsepower and 604 pound-feet of torque from its V-8. There is a six-speed manual transmission. The suspension has been reworked to make the car 50 percent more rigid, which helps the driver keep it under control.

OUTSIDE: Gilles has famously said that the Viper's design was inspired by "a naked woman on the beach." The fluid design has some of Viper's hallmarks, including a "double bubble" roof that gives the driver and passenger more headroom and gills along the fender to release heat from the engine. The headlights are designed to look like snake eyes, while the LED tail lights have a snakeskin texture on the lens.

INSIDE: Chrysler is bringing the Viper's signature bare-bones interior up a notch, with better seat padding, lower seats for improved ergonomics and higher quality materials. A specially designed instrument cluster can be customized by the driver. The Viper also will have an 8.4-inch touchscreen to control the radio, navigation, climate and other applications.

FUEL ECONOMY: Chrysler hasn't released that yet, but no one who buys this car will really care.

PRICE: Chrysler hasn't released a price, but expect it to crack $100,000. The Corvette ZR1 starts at $111,600.

CHEERS: Chrysler didn't truly have a full lineup until it brought back this car. It's a triumph for the company and for the Detroit plant where it will be made.

JEERS: There are lots of other great sports cars available for this much money, from the Audi R8 to the Porsche 911. The Viper could even face some competition from within its own family. Fiat, which holds a majority stake in Chrysler, also owns Ferrari and Maserati.

AP

The SRT Viper is unveiled at the New York International Auto Show, in New York's Javits Center, Wednesday, April 4, 2012.

Under The Hood

Look to emissions system to explain chugging

By BRAD BERGHOLDT
MCCLATCHY-TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

QUESTION: I have begun to have a problem with my 2001 Escape with the V-6 engine. It starts fine in the morning and runs OK for a few miles then begins chugging and loping when I come to a stop. It also hesitates to take off, but then drives OK again after I get to higher speeds. Any ideas of what could be the cause before I make a service appointment?—Karen

ANSWER: There are many reasons for an engine to idle rough or hesitate on acceleration, but most of them would occur at all times. Your comment that the engine runs fine for a short time before acting up leads me to focus on the EGR system. This is an emission control strategy that allows a small quantity of Exhaust Gasses to be Recirculated through the engine a second time. Adding a small, carefully regulated quantity of exhaust to the incoming air-fuel charge reduces combustion temperature, and the formation of NOx, a nasty emission compound.

I wrote about this a while back regarding a GM vehicle, but have since heard of quite a few other makes and models of vehicles encountering similar issues. Many but not all vehicles have EGR. Some, like yours, use a vacuum-operated EGR valve and others use a purely electric EGR, which isn't prone to the problem I'll mention.

EGR is not supposed to occur when the engine is cold, or when idling. If so, engine roughness such as you described may occur. Since your Escape runs well when the engine is cold, it appears the computer controlled electric solenoid (valve) controlling the EGR valve is functioning normally. What I believe may be happening is the control solenoid's vent filter has become restricted, which causes the EGR valve to linger open when the engine returns to idle. This is a serviceable and inexpensive part, located beneath a removable black plastic cap which snaps on to the top of the EGR control solenoid. Unsnapping the cap reveals a removable foam thimble, which can be either cleaned or replaced. Try removing the filter and drive the Escape for a short time without it to see if this corrects your idle loping/roughness symptom.

On other vehicles with a less obvious vent filter location, or perhaps a non-serviceable integrated filter, one can temporarily disconnect and plug the vacuum hose leading to the EGR valve. Its location, along with that of the control solenoid, should be indicated on the under-hood emission control information label— if EGR isn't mentioned, the vehicle likely does not have one. Try driving the vehicle for a few minutes to check for a difference in performance. If it markedly improves, an EGR fault exists. If the check engine light illuminates, don't worry; it'll go out within a day or two and the stored trouble code will self-erase in about two weeks. Long-term disconnection of the EGR is not advised as it is illegal, increases emissions and may lead to engine-damaging detonation, or spark knock.

I should add that an engine that idles rough cold or hot may be the result of an EGR valve that does not fully close. The cause is often a build-up of carbon on the valve seat. Rough running while under way can result from a faulty EGR position or exhaust pressure sensor.

Brad Bergholdt is an automotive technology instructor at Evergreen Valley College in San Jose, Calif. Readers may send him email at under-the-hood@earthlink.net; he cannot make personal replies.

Short commute can mean moisture in your engine

BY PAUL BRAND
STAR TRIBUNE (MINNEAPOLIS)

QUESTION: My daughter has a 1999 Volkswagen Jetta with a 2.0-liter engine and 108,000 miles. When I remove the oil filler cap, I notice moisture buildup inside the engine—a white sludge around the fill cap area. I can usually wipe out most of the moisture with a clean rag. I have been changing the oil on a more regular basis every 2,000 to 3,000 miles in an attempt to reduce the moisture. In the summer, the buildup is less noticeable than in winter. The coolant maintains the proper level, and oil consumption is about two-thirds of a quart per 2,500 miles. Any thoughts on what might be causing the moisture buildup?

ANSWER: The low mileage would seem to indicate infrequent use or short trips—both of which can promote condensation inside an engine. Other potential causes are low engine operating temperature, a blocked positive crankcase ventilation, or PCV, system or a failed temperature regulator thermal vacuum valve, which is designed to preheat incoming induction air.

As the engine warms up, moisture in the air inside the crankcase condenses into liquid form on the cold internal engine parts and is carried throughout the engine by the motor oil. If the engine does not or is not allowed to reach and maintain full operating temperature for a reasonable period of time, it never evaporates, and it turns into a whitish goop on the oil fill cap, dipstick and inside of the valve cover.

Changing oil more frequently helps remove this buildup, but the best answer is to make sure the thermostat is bringing the coolant up to full operating temperature and driving it at that temperature for at least 30 minutes every few days.

■■■

Q: I have a 2008 Ford Fusion. Last year and this year I drove the car to Colorado for a ski vacation. Elevation at the resort is about 8,000 feet. Each year I noticed that every day when I start the car there seemed to be about a two-minute delay before the power brakes worked. After the car idled for several minutes, the problem would disappear. I checked the fluid in the master cylinder, and that is not the problem. The car has no other problems, and the brake pads have plenty of life left on them. Any idea what causes this?

A: The most likely scenario is moisture freezing in the vacuum system for the power brake booster. Until this moisture thaws, no engine vacuum reaches the booster, leaving you with that rock-hard pedal. Once the moisture thaws, the problem disappears. The component most likely to freeze up is the vacuum booster check valve. Cleaning or replacing it before your next winter trip might prevent this.

■■■

Q: I have a 1996 Ford F-150 pickup with about 85,000 miles on it. The past few years it has been sitting in the driveway because of some physical problems I have had. One day, the horn gave a few short blasts. A few hours later, it was a long, continuous, annoying honk. We looked outside and found it was my truck—just honking away for no reason. We called for help, and they pulled the wires on the horns under the hood.

The next day, we saw that the warning lights in the truck were flashing. We disconnected the negative battery cable and have not had any problems since. Now that spring is here, I would like to get the truck in running condition again, but I'm afraid that if I just hook up the battery, it will once again start with these intermittent "hauntings."

A: I think a family of rodents has moved in and homesteaded your truck. These little critters seem to love rubber and chew up wiring insulation. The random electrical issues point toward individual wires in harnesses shorting together. Take a close look at the harnesses under the hood and dash.

Paul Brand, author of How to Repair Your Car, is an automotive troubleshooter, driving instructor and former race-car driver. Readers may write to him at: Star Tribune, 425 Portland Ave. S., Minneapolis, Minn. 55488 or via email at paulbrand@startribune.com. Please explain the problem in detail and include a daytime phone number. It isn't always possible to send a personal reply.

Life&Style

Prayers and silence mark *Titanic* centenary

ABOARD MS BALMORAL (AP)—With prayers, a hymn and a moment of silence broken by a ship's deep whistle, passengers and crew on a memorial trip marked 100 years to the moment since the *Titanic* sent more than 1,500 people to a watery grave.

As the 1912 disaster was commemorated around the world, the city that built the vessel—Belfast, Northern Ireland—looked back on the tragic sinking with a distinctive mixture of sorrow and pride.

In the North Atlantic, passengers lined the decks of the MS *Balmoral*, a cruise ship that has been retracing the route of the doomed voyage, as the ship stopped early Sunday at the spot where the *Titanic* went down in the early hours of April 15, 1912.

After a short service and a moment of silence, three floral wreaths were cast onto the waves as the ship's whistle sounded in the dark.

Jane Allen from Devon in southwest England, whose great-uncle perished on the *Titanic*, said the moment vividly reminded her of the horror of the disaster.

"All you could hear was the swell splashing against the side of the ship. You could see the white breakers stretching out to sea," she told the BBC. "You are in the middle of nowhere. And then you look down over the side of the ship and you realize that every man and every woman who didn't make it into a lifeboat had to make that decision, of when to jump or stay on the ship as the lights went out."

Another cruise ship, *Journey*, which traveled from New York, also held a service at the site, 400 miles (640 kilometers) off the coast of Newfoundland.

The *Titanic*, the world's largest and most luxurious ocean liner, was traveling from England to New York when it struck an iceberg at 11:40 p.m. on April 14, 1912. It sank less than three hours later, with the loss of all but 700 of the 2,208 passengers and crew.

A century on, events around the globe marked a tragedy that retains its grip on the world's imagination.

In Belfast, a memorial monument was unveiled Sunday at a ceremony attended by local dignitaries, relatives of the dead and explorer Robert Ballard, who discovered the wreck of the *Titanic* on the ocean floor in 1985.

A brass band played as the granite plinth bearing bronze plaques was uncovered beside Belfast City Hall. Officials say it is the first *Titanic* memorial to list all victims alphabetically, with no distinction between passengers and crew members, or between first-, second- or third-class travelers.

"We remember all those who perished and whose names are herein inscribed—men, women and children—who loved and were loved, their loss still poignantly felt by their descendants," the Rev. Ian Gilpin told the crowd.

After a minute's silence, a choir sang *Nearer My God To Thee*—the hymn *Titanic*'s band is reported to have played as the ship went down.

Belfast spent decades scarred by its link to the disaster, but has come to take pride in the feats of engineering and industry involved in building the ship. Last month, a gleaming new visitor attraction, Titanic Belfast, opened on the site of the shipyard where the doomed vessel was built.

"The focus of the world is on Belfast and we are doing her proud," said Una Reilly, chair of the Belfast Titanic Society. "We are all proud of this ship. What happened was a disaster; she was not."

On Saturday, thousands attended a memorial concert in Belfast featuring performances by Bryan Ferry and soul singer Joss Stone. At St. Anne's Cathedral in the city, a performance of composer Philip Hammond's *The Requiem for the Lost Souls of the Titanic* was followed by a torch-lit procession to the *Titanic* memorial garden in the grounds of city hall.

The requiem—performed by male choristers dressed as ship's crew and female performers in black—also included words by Belfast novelist Glenn Patterson, who imagined the victims reflecting on all they had missed in the last 100 years.

"We passed instead into myth, launched a library full of books, enough film to cross the Atlantic three times over, more conspiracy theories than Kennedy, 97 million web pages, a tourist industry, a requiem or two," Patterson said. "We will live longer than every one of you."

Remembrance ceremonies also were being held in the ship's departure port of Southampton, southern England—home to hundreds of *Titanic* crew who perished—and in Halifax, Nova Scotia, where more than 100 victims of the tragedy are buried.

The most famous maritime disaster in history was being marked even in places without direct links to it.

Venues in Las Vegas, San Diego, Houston and Singapore hosted *Titanic* exhibitions that include artifacts recovered from the site of the wreck. Among the items: bottles of perfume, porcelain dishes, and a 17-foot piece of hull.

Helen Edwards, one of 1,309 passengers on the *Balmoral* memorial cruise who spent the past week steeped in the *Titanic*'s history and symbolism, said the story's continuing appeal was due to its strong mixture of romance and tragedy, history and fate.

"(There are) all the factors that came together for the ship to be right there, then, to hit that iceberg. All the stories of the passengers who ended up on the ship," said Edwards, a 62-year-old retiree from Silver Spring, Maryland. "It's just a microcosm of social history, personal histories, nautical histories.

"Romance is an appropriate word right up until the time of the tragedy—the band playing, the clothes. And then there's the tragedy."

As the world paused to remember the victims, a U.S. official revealed there may be human remains embedded in the ocean floor where the *Titanic* came to rest.

James Delgado, director of maritime heritage at the National Oceanic and Atmosphere Administration, said Saturday that one photograph taken during a 2004 expedition shows a coat and boots in the mud. He said the way the items are laid out makes a "compelling case" that it is where "someone has come to rest."

Delgado released the full image this week to coincide with the disaster's centenary. It was previously seen in a cropped version.

AP

A rose rests on the new *Titanic* Memorial Plaque during the service at Belfast City Hall, Northern Ireland, Sunday, April 15, 2012 one-hundred years after the Titanic sank.

Ticket to *Titanic* maiden voyage sold at NY auction

NEW YORK (AP)—A New York auction house has sold an original ticket to the 1912 launch of the *Titanic* and a dinner menu from the ill-fated ocean liner, plus items recovered from the wreckage miles underwater.

On the block Sunday at Bonhams were various *Titanic* remnants offered to mark the centennial of its sinking.

The historic admission ticket fetched $56,250, including the auction house premium. The menu, touting choices like the tongue of a castrated rooster and beef sirloin with horseradish, sold for $31,250.

Both went to private American buyers, said Gregg Dietrich, Bonhams' maritime consultant.

He said one surprise at the auction was the comparatively low price paid for a telegraph that read, "We have struck an iceberg."

AP

In this Jan. 31, 2012 photo provided by Bonhams auction house, a ticket to the May 31, 1911 launch of the R.M.S. Titanic is shown.

That message—sold for $27,500—was sent to *Titanic*'s sister ship, the *Olympic*, about three hours before the *Titanic* sank just days into its maiden voyage from Southampton, England, to New York. Only about 700 of the luxury liner's more than 2,200 passengers survived.

One important item that did not sell is a handwritten account from the captain of the *Carpathia* that rescued the survivors, Dietrich said.

"But interest in *Titanic* artifacts remains strong," he said, noting that Bonhams' Manhattan auction room was filled Sunday with about 60 people, in addition to bidders on the phone and online.

He said many items went to buyers collecting *Titanic* artifacts for years.

The most curious lot of the day, Dietrich said, sold for $12,500: three rivets and a piece of porthole glass recovered from the wreckage in the North Atlantic near Newfoundland during expeditions starting in 1987.

Bonhams could not immediately provide a total haul for Sunday's auction.

The biggest sale of *Titanic* lore has yet to come: 5,000 artifacts with a value of hundreds of millions of dollars owned by RMS *Titanic* Inc.

A New York auction planned for April was put on hold because of talks with various parties for the possible purchase of the collection, ranging from passengers' personal possessions and parts of the hull to china and the ship's fittings.

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Three Stooges

Friday		4:10	7:10	9:30
Saturday	1:10	4:10	7:10	9:30
Sunday	1:10	4:10	7:10	
Monday thru Thursday		4:10	7:10	

Will Sasso, Sean Hayes, Chris Diamantopoulos
Comedy • Rated PG

Synopsis

Peter and Bobby Farrelly finally get around to doing their take on the Three Stooges with this 20th Century Fox production. From a script they penned with Mike Cerrone (Me, Myself & Irene), the brothers' comedic take on the trio will not be a biopic, but rather a sampling of new slapstick adventures set in the present day. Will Sasso and Sean Hayes are set to play Curly and Larry respectively.

The Cabin In The Woods

Friday		4:15	7:15	9:55
Saturday	1:15	4:15	7:15	9:55
Sunday	1:15	4:15	7:15	
Monday thru Thursday		4:15	7:15	

Richard Jenkins, Bradley Whitford
Thriller • Rated R

Synopsis

A group of friends head to a cabin in the far reaches of the wilderness for some vacation fun, but they end up getting something completely different in this MGM horror flick. Cloverfield scribe Drew Goddard takes a seat in the director's chair for the first time for this film that he and Joss Whedon wrote together. Kristen Connolly, Chris Hemsworth, Anna Hutchison, Fran Kranz, and Jesse Williams head up the ensemble cast, which also includes Richard Jenkins and Bradley Whitford.

★ ★ ★

American Reunion

Friday		4:05	7:05	9:45
Saturday	1:05	4:05	7:05	9:45
Sunday	1:05	4:05	7:05	
Monday thru Thursday		4:05	7:05	

Jason Biggs, Alyson Hannigan
Comedy • Rated R

Wrath Of The Titans

Friday		4:20	7:20	9:35
Saturday	1:20	4:20	7:20	9:35
Sunday	1:20	4:20	7:20	
Monday thru Thursday		4:20	7:20	

Sam Worthington, Liam Neeson
Fantasy • Rated PG 13

Mirror Mirror

Friday		4:30	7:30	9:50
Saturday	1:30	4:30	7:30	9:50
Sunday	1:30	4:30	7:30	
Monday thru Thursday		4:30	7:30	

Julia Roberts, Lily Collins
Fantasy • Rated PG

The Hunger Games

Friday		4:00	7:00	10:00
Saturday	1:00	4:00	7:00	10:00
Sunday	1:00	4:00	7:00	
Monday thru Thursday		4:00	7:00	

Jennifer Lawrence, Josh Hutcherson
Science fiction • Rated PG 13

21 Jump Street

Friday		4:25	7:25	9:40
Saturday	1:25	4:25	7:25	9:40
Sunday	1:25	4:25	7:25	
Monday thru Thursday		4:25	7:25	

Jonah Hill, Channing Tatum
Comedy, Action • Rated R

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MOVIE SCORES

How the critics rated the new movies

All the hype seems to be justified: "The Cabin in the Woods" is a huge hit with critics.

The much-anticipated horror comedy, produced and co-written by Joss Whedon, follows a group of five college friends who go to a remote cabin for a weekend getaway. Naturally, things do not turn out well.

AP Movie Critic Christy Lemire is among the many reviewers who loved it. She gave it three and a half stars out of four, writing: "Go see 'The Cabin in the Woods,' then come back and we can have a conversation about it. Just trust me on this. The less you know going into it, the better."

AP

In this film image released by Lionsgate, from left, Richard Jenkins, Amy Acker and Bradley Whitford are shown in a scene from "The Cabin in the Woods."

Also opening this weekend is "The Three Stooges," the Farrelly brothers' homage to the classic slapstick comedy trio. Lemire gave it two stars out of four, saying: "It's hard to imagine who the film is for today beyond hardcore fans of the original shorts and 10-year-old boys who double over giggling at the sight of grown men doubling over in pain."

Here's a look at how these movies and others fared on the top review websites as of Friday afternoon. Each score is the percentage of positive reviews for the film:

■ "The Cabin in the Woods": Metacritic, 72; Movie Review Intelligence, 77.1; Rotten Tomatoes, 92. Average: 80.4.

■ "The Three Stooges": Metacritic, 54; Movie Review Intelligence, 56.8; Rotten Tomatoes, 44. Average: 51.6.

■ "Lockout": Metacritic, 47; Movie Review Intelligence, 43.6; Rotten Tomatoes, 29. Average: 39.9.

'Hunger Games' earns $21.5M to slap down 'Stooges'

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Movie fans have chosen real violence over the slapstick variety as "The Hunger Games" held off "The Three Stooges" to remain the No. 1 weekend movie.

Lionsgate's "The Hunger Games," the blockbuster about teens competing in a televised fight to the death, stayed on top for a fourth-straight weekend with $21.5 million. That raises the film's domestic total to $337.1 million.

"I think a couple of weeks ago, if someone had told us where we'd be, we would have said, `We'd like to see that number, but it would be a pleasant surprise.' So we're in that pleasant surprise spot at this point," said Richie Fay, head of distribution for Lionsgate.

Peter and Bobby Farrelly's slapstick update "The Three Stooges" opened in second-place with $17.1 million, according to studio estimates Sunday.

That was well above industry expectations of around $10 million for the 20th Century Fox update starring Chris Diamantopoulos as Moe, Sean Hayes as Larry and Will Sasso as Curly.

Fox executives had figured the movie would appeal mainly to young males. But it also pulled in older men who grew up on the Stooges and a fair number of women and girls as whole families turned out to see it, said Chris Aronson, the studio's head of distribution.

"If you're predisposed to open your mind, it's a laugh riot," Aronson said.

The acclaimed horror tale "The Cabin in the Woods" debuted in third-place with $14.9 million. A smart, twisting take on the genre produced and co-written by Joss Whedon ("Buffy the Vampire Slayer"), the long-delayed "Cabin in the Woods" had been one of the films caught up in MGM's bankruptcy but was finally released by Lionsgate.

On the 100th anniversary of the ship's sinking on April 15, 1912, the 3-D version of James Cameron's "Titanic" sailed past the $2 billion mark worldwide.

"Titanic" is just the second blockbuster to top $2 billion, trailing only the next film Cameron made—the sci-fi sensation "Avatar," which took in $2.8 billion.

Domestically, "Titanic" held the No. 4 spot with $11.6 million. The 3-D re-release has taken in $44.4 million domestically to lift the film's lifetime total to $645.2 million.

"Titanic" also pulled in $88.2 million in 69 overseas markets, including a huge $58 million 3-D debut in China. That brought the 3-D reissue's overseas total to $146.4 million and the worldwide sum for re-release to $190.8 million.

Added to the $1.84 billion take from the original release of the 1997 hit, "Titanic" has climbed to a lifetime total of about $2.03 billion.

Another big overseas haul came with Universal's "Battleship," which opened with $58 million in 26 countries five weeks ahead of its U.S. debut on May 18. The action tale featuring Taylor Kitsch and Liam Neeson is inspired by the game Battleship.

"The Hunger Games" added $15 million overseas to bring its international total to $194 million and its worldwide haul to $531 million.

The weekend's other new domestic wide release, Film District's sci-fi story "Lockout," opened at No. 9 with $6.3 million. The movie stars Guy Pearce trying to quell an uprising at an orbiting space prison.

With no big new debut on the domestic front, the overall box office slipped for only the second weekend this year. Domestic revenues totaled $117 million, down 10 percent from the same weekend last year, when "Rio" led with $39.2 million, according to box-office tracker Hollywood.com.

Domestic revenues this year are at $2.98 billion, 19.3 percent ahead of 2011's, putting Hollywood on a record money pace with a big summer lineup just weeks away. The superhero tale "The Avengers" kicks off the summer season May 4.

Revenues may continue to lag over the next couple of weeks compared to last year, when the action hit "Fast Five" boosted business just before the summer season.

"This year, we don't really have something like that, but with the 20 percent lead we have over last year, we don't really need it. We are in terrific shape going into summer," said Hollywood.com analyst Paul Dergarabedian.

Estimated ticket sales for Friday through Sunday at U.S. and Canadian theaters, according to Hollywood.com. Where available, latest international numbers are also included. Final domestic figures will be released Monday.

1. "**The Hunger Games**," $21.5 million *($15 million international)*.
2. "**The Three Stooges**," $17.1 million.
3. "**The Cabin in the Woods**," $14.9 million *($3.4 million international)*.
4. "**Titanic**" in 3-D, $11.6 million *($88.2 million international)*.
5. "**American Reunion**," $10.6 million *($11.8 million international)*.
6. "**Mirror Mirror**," $7 million *($10.2 million international)*.
7. "**Wrath of the Titans**," $6.9 million *($16 million international)*.
8. "**21 Jump Street**," $6.8 million *($4 million international)*.
9. "**Lockout**," $6.3 million.
10. "**Dr. Seuss' the Lorax**," $3 million *($8.6 million international)*.

Fans recall American artist Jackson Pollock at 100

EAST HAMPTON, N.Y. (AP)—Out behind a small farmhouse on a Long Island country road sits an old gray barn where a tormented artist dripped paint off brushes, sticks—even turkey basters—onto canvasses spread out on a wooden floor. Besides making quite a mess of things, leaving splash marks everywhere, Jackson Pollock also created some of the 20th century's greatest masterpieces.

Pollock, who would have turned 100 this year, is being remembered at a New York City fundraiser later this month honoring a charity that aids struggling artists, along with the Academy Award-nominated actor and filmmaker Ed Harris who spent nearly a decade making the 2000 film "Pollock."

There also are exhibitions in Washington, D.C., and at the home Pollock shared with his wife, artist Lee Krasner, in the Springs community of East Hampton—now a museum and study center. And shoe manufacturer Crocs is releasing a Pollock-inspired shoe this June, fashioned after the paint-splashed floor that visitors can still see in the artist's barn.

"I think Pollock's art is incredible," Harris told The Associated Press in a recent telephone interview. "I think it was revolutionary at the time and I think it kind of holds up that way and it is really exquisite."

The fundraiser honoring Harris, and the Pollock-Krasner Foundation, which has given $56.3 million in grants to artists in 72 countries since 1985, is intended to help finance and expand the work of a separate Stony Brook University-based organization that runs the Pollock-Krasner home.

3-D release steers 'Titanic' past $2 billion mark

LOS ANGELES (AP)—James Cameron has shored up his position as king of the worldwide box office.

Cameron's 1997 blockbuster "Titanic" sailed beyond the $2 billion mark in lifetime ticket sales, thanks to a 3-D re-release of the film that was timed to the centennial of the ship's sinking.

Only one other movie has topped $2 billion, and it's also Cameron's. His 2009 sci-fi smash "Avatar" earned $2.8 billion worldwide.

The "Titanic" reissue took in about $100 million this weekend—$11.6 million domestically and a whopping $88.2 million in 69 overseas markets. That included a $58 million debut in China and put the re-release total worldwide at $190.8 million.

Added to the film's $1.84 billion haul in its original release, "Titanic" now stands at $2.03 billion worldwide.

In this undated file image released by Paramount Pictures, Leonardo DiCaprio and Kate Winslet, left, are shown in a scene from the 3-D version of James Cameronís romantic epic "Titanic."

AP

Britain's Donovan inducted to Rock Hall of Fame

CLEVELAND (AP)—Donovan, a folksy British singer-songwriter once labeled "the new Dylan," has been inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame.

Overlooked by voters in previous years, Donovan has finally been saluted for his accomplishments as a gifted lyricist and musician. Born Donovan Leitch, he blended poetry into folk songs and scored a string of hits in the 1960s with "Sunshine Superman," "Mellow Yellow" and "Hurdy Gurdy Man."

The 65-year-old Donovan was inducted Saturday night in Cleveland by fellow Hall of Famer John Mellencamp, who said he was in seventh grade when he bought his first Donovan record in 1965.

Mellencamp said his work was inspired by Donovan's melodies, lyrics and arrangements. Mellencamp says listening to Donovan taught him "how to play those songs."

Cosby: Trayvon Martin case about guns, not race

WASHINGTON (AP)—Actor and comedian Bill Cosby says the debate over the killing of Trayvon Martin by a neighborhood watch volunteer should be focused on guns, not race.

In an interview on CNN's "State of the Union" aired Sunday, Cosby said calling George Zimmerman a racist doesn't solve anything. Cosby says the bigger question is what Zimmerman was doing with a gun, and who taught him how to behave with it.

Cosby

The shooting of the 17-year-old Martin on Feb. 26 has ignited a nationwide debate about race and self-defense.

Cosby said during the interview, which was taped Thursday afternoon, that he once owned a gun but no longer does. He says there is a need to get guns off the streets, and that people should be taught to use every possible alternative before shooting someone.

Faces donate bio to Rock Hall's new library

CLEVELAND (AP)—With his guitar, Ronnie Wood made rock and roll history. On Friday, he helped make sure it's preserved.

On the eve of his second induction into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, Wood and two other members of British bands The Small Faces and The Faces donated a bio of the bands to the hall's new library and archives.

Best known for his time with the Rolling Stones, Wood was joined by Ian McLagan and Kenney Jones, who were in The Small Faces before the band reformed as The Faces with Rod Stewart as its lead singer.

The three musicians donated the biography titled "Faces" that chronicles the history of both bands to the library's vast collection of recordings, periodicals, photographs and other documents.

The archives, which are located a few miles from the Rock Hall, opened in January. It was officially dedicated this week. Housed inside a new four-story building are materials chronicling rock history donated by some of music's most significant figures.

The archives will be a place for fans, students and scholars to have access to items including lyric sheets, personal papers and rare concert footage.

McLagan said the archives will ensure rock's rich history is passed down to future generations.

AP

Ron Wood, left, performs with Simply Red lead singer Mick Hucknall after The Small Faces/Faces were inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame Saturday, April 14, 2012, in Cleveland. Hucknall subbed for Faces member Rod Stewart who was ill.

Mindy McCready, boyfriend welcome baby boy

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (AP)—Mindy McCready is a mother for a second time.

McCready and boyfriend David Wilson welcomed their son Zayne on Monday. In a statement, McCready called the boy "a blessing and a joy." The country singer and former "Celebrity Rehab" star says it was "a long and trying" pregnancy. The statement said McCready would not be doing interviews because of a court directive in the custody case over her first son, Zander.

McCready took Zander from her mother and the boy's legal guardian, Gayle Inge, late last year. She fled to Arkansas without permission over what she called child abuse fears. Authorities eventually found McCready and Wilson hiding in a residence without permission and took the boy into custody.

Zander's status is unclear due to court privacy rules.

Extra coupons left on shelves cause more harm than good

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
FROM UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

DEAR ABBY: I'm a 43-year-old veteran of the grocery industry. I am also an associate of one of the premier supermarkets in the country, and I disagree with your response to "Chicago Clipper" (Feb. 18)!

Coupons are a necessary evil and are graciously accepted, but they create an abundance of work for retailers. It takes countless hours of sorting, logging, filling out forms, mailing and receiving to be reimbursed for the face value of the coupon. This is hardly a benefit to the grocer.

The abuse and fraud associated with coupons adds up into millions of dollars. When a customer leaves one on a shelf for the next shopper, it usually ends up on the floor. So we now have a slick surface that someone can slip on and fall. When they are placed on an item in the dairy or meat case, they inevitably fall to the bottom and clog the drains, which causes water backups—another safety hazard—not to mention it's trash we must fish out. All of this takes time and money away from the associates performing our duties in a very low-profit industry.

By leaving an unwanted coupon on a store shelf for the next customer, Chicago Clipper is NOT "paying it forward." She's adding to the problem. So, please, folks, keep your coupons in your purse, wallet, pocket or coupon book until you get to the checkout line.

FLORIDA BUTCHER

DEAR FLORIDA BUTCHER: Thank you for pointing out to my readers and me some of the problems coupons may create. Your sentiments were repeated by many retailers. However, other shoppers and retailers offered suggestions that may help to eliminate the problem, including: coupon exchanges, donating them to the military, posting them on Freecycle, Craigslist or Facebook, etc. Read on:

■ ■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: I am a coupon user. I am also a grocery store employee. I constantly have to pick up coupons left by customers who are "paying it forward" or "being generous." Not only are they a safety hazard, but they make our store look unkempt. We pride ourselves in maintaining a high standard of appearance. We actually clean up more coupons than those we redeem.

Why not hand the extra coupons to your checker and ask that they be offered to the next customer? As for litterbugs who leave expired coupons laying around, every check stand is equipped with a garbage can, and an employee will be more than happy to throw out your trash if you ask.

STORE MANAGER IN MONTANA

DEAR ABBY: I leave coupons for others, but I often go one step further. If I see someone with the item in his or her cart, I'll offer the coupon directly to that person. So far, I have met pleasant people who are happy to get a break at the cash register. I have also met people who have told me how delighted they were to find coupons on shelves.

MARIE IN MAINE

■ ■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: I'm a widow with a 20-year-old car and I accidentally smashed in its front end.

When I got home and my neighbor saw what had happened, he spent his next weekend at a wreckage yard buying all the necessary replacements. The following weekend he reassembled my car to perfection.

Would he take any money for his efforts? No!

Abby, there are wonderful people in this world and he is certainly one of them. And incidentally, he is a Navy captain on active duty.

LEE IN SAN DIEGO

DEAR LEE: So your guardian angel wears a Navy uniform! He's not only an officer and a gentleman, but also a master mechanic. You are one lucky lady, and he is a sweetheart.

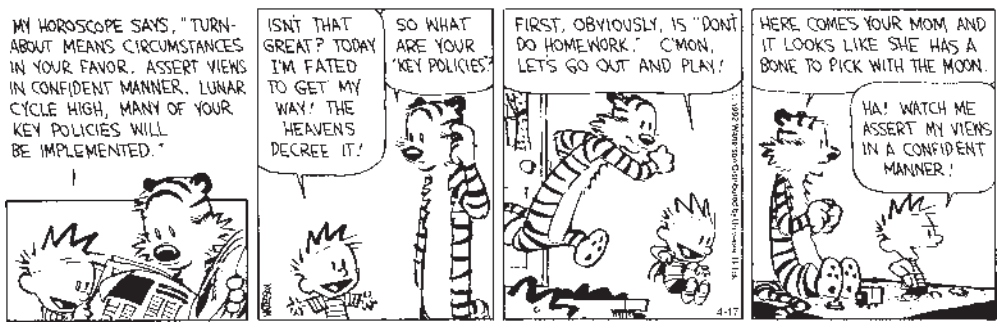
Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

For an excellent guide to becoming a better conversationalist and a more sociable person, order "How to Be Popular." Send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for $7 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby, Popularity Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson


MY HOROSCOPE SAYS, "TURN-ABOUT MEANS CIRCUMSTANCES IN YOUR FAVOR. ASSERT VIEWS IN CONFIDENT MANNER. LUNAR CYCLE HIGH, MANY OF YOUR KEY POLICIES WILL BE IMPLEMENTED."
ISN'T THAT GREAT? TODAY I'M FATED TO GET MY WAY! THE HEAVENS DECREE IT!
SO WHAT ARE YOUR 'KEY POLICIES?'
FIRST, OBVIOUSLY, IS "DON'T DO HOMEWORK." C'MON, LET'S GO OUT AND PLAY!
HERE COMES YOUR MOM, AND IT LOOKS LIKE SHE HAS A BONE TO PICK WITH THE MOON.
HA! WATCH ME ASSERT MY VIEWS IN A CONFIDENT MANNER!

Garfield®

By Jim Davis

WOO-HOO! IT'S BUTTERFLY TIME!
WHOA, I'M A LITTLE DIZZY
I'M GOING TO LIE HERE AWHILE AND THEN CALL A CAB
NATURE ISN'T WHAT IT USED TO BE
Distributed by Universal Uclick www.facebook.com/garfield
JIM DAVIS 4-17 ©2012 PAWS, INC. All Rights Reserved.

Adam@home

By Bryan Basset

I CAN'T GET OVER HOW REAL THIS BASEBALL GAME IS.
I KNOW, RIGHT? IF YOU LOOK CLOSELY, YOU CAN EVEN SEE THE PLAYERS' WIVES IN THE STANDS.
HEY, THERE THEY ARE. WOW...
GET A LOAD OF ALL THE BOTOX, SPRAY TANS AND ARROGANCE COMING FROM THAT SECTION.
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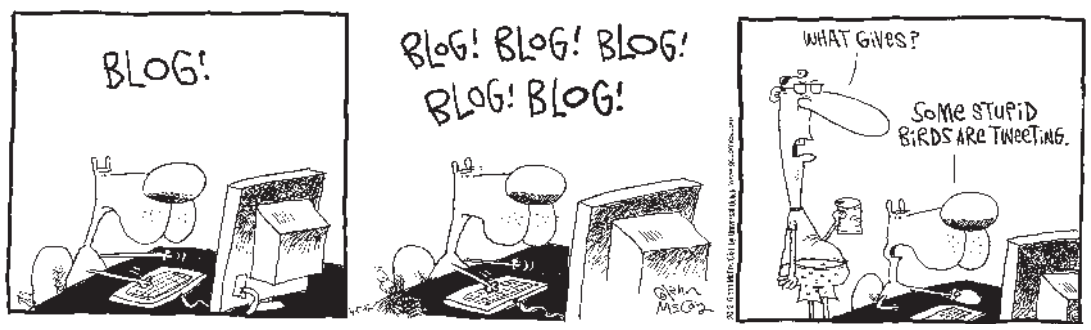
4-17

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy



CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS
1 Rodgers collaborator
5 Kreskin's claim
8 Birthright barterer
12 Smell
13 Twosome
14 Swine
15 Paper
17 Responsibility
18 Charged bit
19 Good horseshoe toss
21 Burrito condiment
24 Shetland, for one
25 Spruce up
26 Piece
30 Help
31 Got up
32 Homer's interjection
33 Cellar
35 Landlocked African nation
36 Amateur-night prop
37 Imp
38 Call forth
41 Madam's counterpart
42 Henry —
43 Slumlord's building
48 Heidi's heights
49 A Gershwin
50 Related (to)
51 Egg container?
52 Upper limit
53 Barbershop call

DOWN
1 Scuttle
2 Commotion
3 Sinbad's bird
4 Self-evident fact
5 Paradise
6 Morning light
7 Braised beef recipe
8 Name derived from a person
9 Croon
10 Chills and fever
11 Cold War nation (Abbr.)
16 Extinct bird
20 "Bus Stop" playwright
21 Pierce
22 Operatic solo
23 Covers
24 Tine
26 Greatly excited
27 Dutch cheese
28 — contendere
29 Reedy
31 Beyond control
34 One with "I" trouble?
35 Famed Broadway belter
37 Conk out
38 Terrible guy?
39 Cleopatra's water
40 Big shots
41 Break suddenly
44 Historic time
45 — out a living
46 Veto
47 Potent stick

Solution time: 21 mins.

S	I	T		C	U	B	A	N		I	D	S
K	O	I		O	M	F	G	A		N	F	O
I	N	C	U	M	B	E	N	T		C	A	P
			P	E	R		E	I	H	E	L	S
A	R	I	S	T	A		S	E	E	S		
M	A	N		S	G	T		R	E	S	T	S
P	I	C	S		E	N	D		D	A	H	L
S	L	I	T	S		T	E	C		N	E	E
			P	E	A	T		F	A	T	T	E	D
W	R	I	T	I	E		I	D	A			
H	U	E		I	N	C	L	E	M	E	N	T
I	N	N		B	E	S	E	I		G	O	O
M	E	T		S	T	I	R	S		O	D	E

Yesterday's answer 4-17

1	2	3	4	■	5	6	7	■	8	9	10	11
12				■	13				14			
15				16				■	17			
■	■	■	18			■	19	20				
21	22	23			■	24				■	■	■
25				■	26					27	28	29
30			■	31					■	32		
33			34					■	35			
■	■	■	36				■	37				
38	39	40				■	41			■	■	■
42				■	43	44				45	46	47
48				■	49			■	50			
51				■	52			■	53			

STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Rooney Mara, 27; Victoria Beckham, 38; Jennifer Garner, 40; Sean Bean, 53.

Happy Birthday: You cannot let your emotions run wild or prompt you to enforce change in your life. Step back and re-evaluate what you must do before you make a mistake. The opportunity to get ahead financially mustn't be wasted because someone in your life is insecure, selfish or jealous of what you can achieve on your own. Your numbers are 5, 11, 17, 20, 32, 37, 41.

ARIES (*March 21-April 19*): Don't limit possibilities. Think outside the box and try doing things differently. It's up to you to set a new standard that addresses past problems in order to find future solutions. Love is highlighted, but secret affairs must be avoided. ✪✪✪

TAURUS (*April 20-May 20*): Kick-start and initiate, but most of all, participate. Make your point clear by stepping into the spotlight and sharing your concerns, ideas and solutions. You will draw attention that can lead to bigger opportunities and fabulous new connections. ✪✪✪✪

GEMINI (*May 21-June 20*): You'll be disappointed if you count on others to do things for you. Focus your energy on developing your own plans and executing them strategically to your own specifications. The fewer people involved in your affairs, the better. ✪✪

CANCER (*June 21-July 22*): Do your job a little differently and you will inspire originality in others as well. Your ability to relay information and share your thoughts will resonate with those striving to make improvements. Give-and-take will lead to greater opportunities. ✪✪✪✪✪

LEO (*July 23-Aug. 22*): Stick to your budget. This is not the time to be indulgent in any way. Simplicity and originality will be key to standing out in a crowd. You can make reforms and alter your direction if you express your thoughts. ✪✪✪

VIRGO (*Aug. 23-Sept. 22*): Take better care of your health and emotional well-being. Getting rundown or neglecting mild symptoms will lead to a longer recovery and a lack of productivity. Take care of both emotional and physical problems immediately. ✪✪✪

LIBRA (*Sept. 23-Oct. 22*): A change in the way someone treats you can be expected. Stay on top of what's required of you and keep an eye on someone who has made a commitment in return. Give-and-take and honest communication will be essential. ✪✪✪

SCORPIO (*Oct. 23-Nov. 21*): Take the initiative and make changes at home that will help you engage in neglected projects. It's important to be surrounded by the tools, atmosphere or inspiration you require in order to develop, present and promote your goals. ✪✪✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS (*Nov. 22-Dec. 21*): Believe in your ability and experience. You can expect to be offered empty promises. Unreliable people will lead to problems with paperwork that must be completed before you continue. Work only with the people you know well and trust. ✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN (*Dec. 22-Jan. 19*): Stick close to home. Expand your interests, but first get your paperwork up to date. A chance to improve your surroundings or to invest in a space that allows you to take on a new project will pay off. ✪✪✪✪

AQUARIUS (*Jan. 20-Feb. 18*): Getting in touch with old friends or reviving old interests will also bring about greater opportunities for love, or at least help you make a decision regarding your personal direction and partnerships. Make creative changes to your surroundings. ✪✪✪

PISCES (*Feb. 19-March 20*): Keep things mellow, no matter who you are dealing with. Disputes will arise if you are stubborn, unrelenting or critical when dealing with your family, peers or your lover. Avoid emotional encounters. ✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are bright, spontaneous and charming. You are confident and in control.

Eugenia's Web sites: ***eugenialast.com*** *for confidential consultations,* ***myspace.com/eugenialast*** *for Eugenia's blog,* ***astroadvice.com*** *for fun*

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

			4		3			
			6			8		
4	6	1	2			5		
				1		2	8	
7								5
	9	4		8				
		9			3	7	4	6
		8			5			
		3		9				

Difficulty Level ★★ 4/17

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's SUDOKU Answer

3	9	7	2	4	1	6	8	5
8	6	5	7	9	3	2	4	1
4	1	2	5	6	8	7	3	9
9	5	3	1	7	4	8	2	6
7	8	6	9	5	2	4	1	3
1	2	4	3	8	6	9	5	7
6	3	1	8	2	7	5	9	4
2	7	9	4	3	5	1	6	8
5	4	8	6	1	9	3	7	2

Difficulty Level ★

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WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

Solution: 11 letters

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally, even backward. Find them and **CIRCLE THEIR LETTERS ONLY. DO NOT CIRCLE THE WORD.** The leftover letters spell the Wonderword.

THE CATHOLIC CHANNEL ON SIRIUS/XM SATELLITE RADIO

T	E	T	T	C	L	O	S	E	U	P	M	A	S	S
E	H	T	S	T	I	L	L	I	W	L	U	O	S	A
M	V	E	A	E	E	S	O	Ⓐ	Ⓡ	Ⓣ	Ⓢ	O	U	P
A	A	A	C	B	I	A	U	Y	U	I	R	S	S	P
D	T	T	D	A	E	R	C	M	D	C	L	O	E	A
E	I	F	A	R	T	D	P	H	J	H	S	L	J	P
R	C	I	O	L	E	H	Y	S	E	U	R	A	U	P
T	A	G	R	I	E	H	O	L	N	R	E	H	P	R
O	N	A	B	N	T	O	T	L	N	C	Y	D	E	A
N	I	B	G	O	L	P	Z	A	I	H	W	E	A	Y
S	L	R	M	S	O	E	L	C	F	C	D	T	C	E
U	E	I	W	K	R	O	Y	W	E	N	G	S	E	R
G	T	E	V	E	D	T	A	I	R	A	M	U	H	S
G	I	L	L	E	N	E	V	E	I	L	E	B	Y	E
V	D	A	S	E	Y	E	V	O	L	T	S	U	J	Y

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Arts, Believe, Broadcast, Busted Halo, Calls, Church, Close Up, Cross, Debate, Dolan, Dwyer, Eyes, Father Dave, Gabriel, Gift, Gillen, Greg, Gus, Hope, Jennifer, Jesus, Just Love, Lino, Live, Lloyd, Lord, Maria, Mass, Music, New York, Notre Dame, Pappas, Pascual, Peace, Prayers, Priest, Rulli, Soul, Teach, The Catholic Guy, Timothy, Vatican, Views, Willits

Yesterday's Answer: Activity

CLASSIFIED ADS

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IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

In the Matter of the Adoption of
HANS CHRISTOPHER TAILUGBWE YAROBWEMAL
by Antonio Yarobwemal and Linda Yarobwemal
FCD AD Civil Action No. 12-0136

NOTICE OF HEARING REGARDING PROPOSED ADOPTION OF
HANS CHRISTOPHER TAILUGBWE YAROBWEMAL

Please take notice that the hearing regarding the proposed adoption of **HANS CHRISTOPHER TAILUGBWE YAROBWEMAL** by Antonio Yarobwemal and Linda Yarobwemal originally set for April 12, 2012 will be moved to **April 23, 2012 at 1:30 p.m.** The hearing will be held at the Commonwealth Superior Court, Courtroom 217A.

Hans Christopher Tailugbwe Yarobwemal was born on June 5, 2003 in Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. The petition for the adoption of Hans Christopher Tailugbwe Yarobwemal is sealed. However, a copy of the petition will be provided to any person that requests a copy before the date of the hearing and is able to demonstrate that they are or may be an interested person to Hans Christopher Tailugbwe Yarobwemal's adoption, as determined by CNMI law. If you believe that you are an interested person, a copy of the petition may be obtained by contacting the Law Offices of Rexford C. Kosack, P.O. Box 500410, Saipan, MP 96950; Telephone (670) 322-8800; Fax (670) 322-7800; E-mail: **rex.kosack@kosacklaw.com.**

Failure of interested persons to appear at the hearing and provide their objections will result in them forever waiving any rights that they may have to contest this adoption.

DATED: April 12, 2012.

/s/REXFORD C. KOSACK
Attorney at Law

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Ocean View Terraces. Luxury 2BR & 1BTH Apts w/private balcony & beautiful view. Rooms w/ A/C & Fully Furnished. Back-up Generator. Free Wi-Fi. Laundry Area. Nightime security. 235-6527/28 or 285-1317.

Sunset View Terraces. Luxury 2BR & 1BTH Apts w/private balcony & beautiful view. Rooms w/ A/C & Fully Furnished. Back-up Generator. Free Wi-Fi. Laundry Area. Nightime security. 235-6527/28 or 285-1317.

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The truth hurts

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QUALIFICATIONS:

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Knowledgeable in mechanical problem.
in charge of repairing, troubleshooting and upgrading the vehicle's electrical system as well as the devices that relies on electrical energy.

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Commonwealth Utilities Corporation

JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

JVA No. 12-010

Opening Date: Tuesday, 4/13/12
Closing Date: Until Filled

SENIOR ENGINEER

Duties: The Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC) is a government utility providing power, water, and wastewater services in the Northern Mariana Islands (NMI), a United States commonwealth adjacent Asia and about three hours south of Tokyo, Japan. The incumbent of this position is under the overall supervision of the Chief Engineer or his/her designee. Coordinates and meets with other divisional sections and corporate divisions to coordinate activities and projects. Supervises engineering support staff to include: prioritizing and assigning work; conducting performance evaluations; ensuring staffs are trained; and, making hiring, termination, and disciplinary recommendations. Performs project management activities to include: preparing reports, memorandums and recommendations; developing scope of work; providing technical reviews; surveying for projects; developing procurement documents, evaluating proposals; monitoring project process; approving payment; and, recommending award of projects. Prepares engineering designs, plans and specifications; collects data and performs research. Troubleshoots systems and equipment. Planning, design, construction management, and operations of water and wastewater systems in a marine environment. Research, write, and manage the conditions and requirements of federal grants for water and wastewater systems. Reviews work performed by engineering technicians. Performs other duties of a similar nature or level.

LOCATION: Water and Wastewater Divisions, **SAIPAN, Northern Mariana Islands, USA**.

SALARY: $60,000 to $90,000 per year; un-graded, un-classified.

(Plus negotiable relocation costs to and from the NMI if hired from outside the NMI, but not to exceed $15,000 for relocation to the NMI and not to exceed $5,000 for relocation away from the NMI)

POSITION(S): One.

CONTRACT: Two-year.

Minimum Requirements: Bachelor's Degree in Civil (or Environmental), Electrical, or Mechanical Engineering and four years of directly related experience in a water or wastewater utility. A Master's Degree in Engineering is preferred. Must be a licensed professional engineer from a U.S. state or territory. An engineer with an active NCEES Record preferred. Knowledge of: Safe work practices; Applicable Federal, State, and/or Local laws, rules, and regulations; Project management principles; Mathematical concepts; Engineering principles and practices. Skill in: Monitoring and evaluating staff; Prioritizing and assigning work to staff; Managing multiple projects; Interpreting and applying Federal, State, and/or Local laws, rules, and regulations; Interpreting drawings; Preparing a variety of technical reports and/or documentation; Presenting technical information to management, public groups, and other related individuals; Reading and interpreting scaled drawings; Preparing specifications, plans, and cost estimates; Conducting studies; Using computers and related software applications; Using CAD programs to prepare plans for small projects and exhibits; Communication, interpersonal skills as applied to interaction with coworkers, supervisor, the general public, etc. sufficient to exchange or convey information and to receive work direction. Must have a U.S. driver's license.

Applications may be picked up at the Human Resource Office or the CUC Tinian Office or CUC Rota Office. Failure to provide the required documents listed on the application will be grounds for disqualification.

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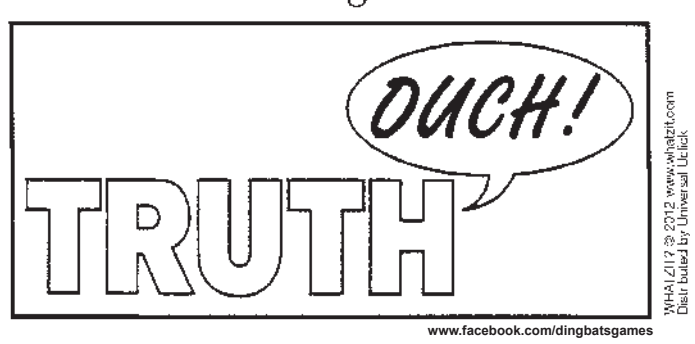

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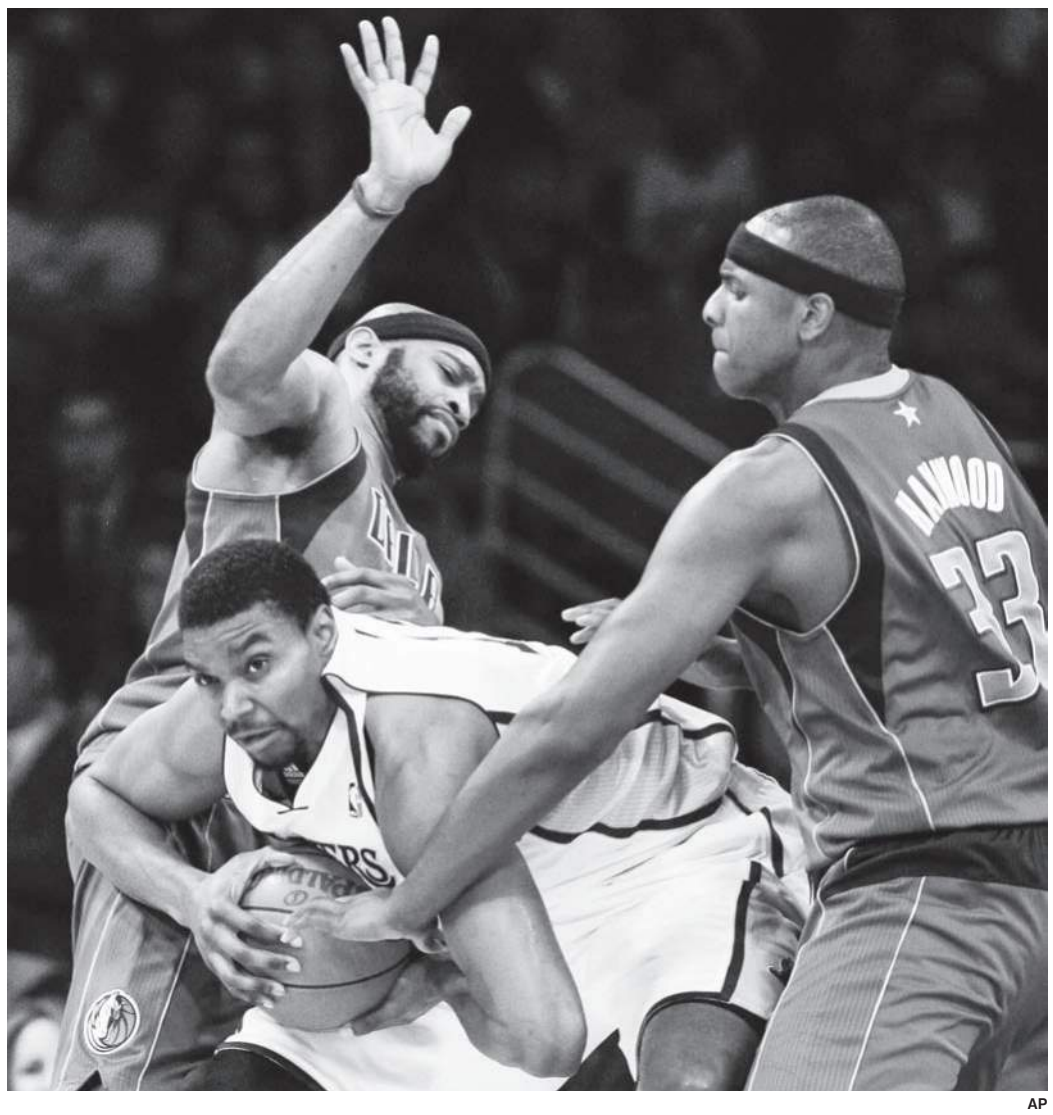
Lakers beat Mavericks without Bryant

LOS ANGELES (AP)—The Los Angeles Lakers won their fourth straight game without Kobe Bryant, beating the defending NBA champion Dallas Mavericks 112-108 in overtime on Sunday.

Andrew Bynum had 23 points and 16 rebounds while Pau Gasol made back-to-back 3-pointers in overtime for the Lakers.

Los Angeles rallied from a fourth-quarter deficit before finishing off a four-game season sweep of the Mavericks, who bounced the Lakers out of last season's playoffs.

Dirk Nowitzki had 24 points on 9-of-28 shooting and 14 rebounds for Dallas but Jason Terry missed a potential tying layup at the rim with 5 seconds left in overtime.



AP

Los Angeles Lakers center Andrew Bynum, middle, battles to keep the ball from Dallas Mavericks center Brendan Haywood, right, and Mavericks guard Vince Carter during the first half of an NBA basketball game, Sunday, April 15, 2012, in Los Angeles.

Heat 93, Knicks 85

In New York, Miami clinched the Southeast Division title by beating New York.

LeBron James had 29 points and 10 rebounds while Dwyane Wade added 28 points and nine boards for the Heat, who pulled away in the fourth quarter of a possible playoff preview. Miami is second in the Eastern Conference and New York came into the game tied for seventh, although they fell back behind Philadelphia after the loss.

Carmelo Anthony scored 42 points but had only two baskets in the fourth quarter for the Knicks, who had won nine straight at home.

Nuggets 101, Rockets 86

In Denver, Arron Afflalo scored 20 of his 22 points in the second half, leading Denver over Houston in the opener of a crucial two games between playoff hopefuls.

With the win, the Nuggets took sole possession of seventh place in the Western Conference, half a game behind Dallas.

The teams are clinging to the final two playoff spots in the West, trying to fend off fast-charging Phoenix and Utah.

Ty Lawson also scored 20 points for Denver, which has won five straight at home.

Chase Budinger and Luis Scola each scored 19 to lead the Rockets, who had won four straight on the road.

Bulls 100, Pistons 94, OT

In Auburn Hills, Michigan, Derrick Rose hit a tying 3-pointer in the final seconds of regulation, and Chicago went on to win in overtime, beating Detroit for the 15th straight time.

Rose finished with 24 points while Joakim Noah had 20 points and 17 rebounds for the Bulls, who stayed 3-1/2 games ahead of Miami in the race for top spot in the Eastern Conference.

Rodney Stuckey scored 32 points for the Pistons, but he missed two crucial free throws late in the fourth quarter.

Raptors 102, Hawks 86

In Atlanta, DeMar DeRozan scored 23 points to lift injury-riddled Toronto over Atlanta.

Alan Anderson, one of three Toronto players whose 10-day contract is about to expire, added 16 points for the Raptors.

Josh Smith scored 12 of his 26 points in the first quarter for the Hawks, but they never led and allowed Toronto to shoot 55 percent (41 for 74).

Magic 100, Cavaliers 84

In Cleveland, Orlando clinched a playoff berth with a win over Cleveland.

Jameer Nelson scored 21 points for the Magic, who led from the start despite star center Dwight Howard being absent again with a herniated disk in his back.

Howard and forward Hedo Turkoglu (facial fracture) are sidelined indefinitely. Coach Stan Van Gundy said he's preparing to play the rest of the regular season and the playoffs without the two.

Antawn Jamison led the Cavaliers with 21 points.

Hornets 88, Grizzlies 75

In New Orleans, the hosts upset playoff-contending Memphis.

Eric Gordon scored 18 points for the Hornets, who pulled away in the fourth quarter. Carl Landry had 16 points and 11 rebounds.

Rudy Gay scored 24 points for the Grizzlies, who had won five of six.

Kings 104, Trail Blazers 103

In Sacramento, Marcus Thornton scored 20 points and made the winning jumper with 3.4 seconds left, lifting Sacramento over Portland.

Thornton hit a 17-footer off an inbound pass before Portland's Raymond Felton missed a desperation shot from halfcourt at the buzzer.

DeMarcus Cousins scored 23 points for the Kings, who rallied from a 10-point deficit in the fourth quarter to snap a seven-game skid.

Wes Matthews made a career-high eight 3-pointers and scored 31 points for the Trail Blazers, who made lost despite making 16 of their 32 3-point attempts.

Celtics 94, Bobcats 82

In Charlotte, Boston was able to rest its star players and still comfortably beat Charlotte.

Kevin Garnett, Paul Pierce and Ray Allen were given the night off, but the Celtics did not need them.

Rajon Rondo had 20 points and 16 assists while Avery Bradley and Brandon Bass each scored 22 points.

The loss was the Bobcats' 16th straight, tying a franchise worst set earlier this season. Gerald Henderson had 22 points in a losing effort for the Bobcats (7-52), who need to win one of their final seven games to avoid having the worst single-season winning percentage in NBA history.

Carl Pettersson wins RBC Heritage

HILTON HEAD ISLAND, S.C. (AP)—Carl Pettersson had another fast start and finished with a 2-under 69 for a five-shot victory over Zach Johnson on Sunday in the RBC Heritage.

Pettersson had a run of five straight birdies on the front nine during the third round Saturday to move in front. This time, Pettersson birdied three of the first five holes and built a five-shot lead by the turn that he never relinquished. He finished at 14 under.

It was Pettersson's fifth career PGA Tour title and first since the 2010 Canadian Open. He tied countryman Jesper Parnevik for most wins on tour by a Swedish player.

"It was great," Pettersson said. "I didn't want to put too much pressure on myself, so I kind of downplayed the whole thing. But getting off to a birdie on one was great."

Pettersson, second in the Houston Open two weeks ago, earned $1,026,000.

Top-ranked Luke Donald needed to finish eighth or better to retain his ranking, but tied for 37th and will fall behind Rory McIlroy.

Johnson shot a 70 to finish second at 9 under, while Colt Knost's chances for his first PGA Tour title fell apart with a 74. He was third, another shot further back.

Kevin Stadler (68) and Billy Mayfair (69) tied for fourth at 6 under. Two-time Heritage winner Boo Weekley had his worst round of the week, 73, to tie for sixth with Matt Bettencourt (69).

Masters winner Bubba Watson and most of the world's best took the week off to recover from the year's first major.

Pettersson rolled in a 24-footer on No. 1 to get things started with a birdie. He added another birdie, from 16 feet on the par-3 fourth hole, then two-putted from 40 feet on the par-5 fifth to go up by four shots. When Johnson took bogey at No. 10, Pettersson was five strokes in front and cruising.

Knost was on top after Thursday and Friday and felt good as part of the final pairing. But those nerves Knost acknowledged on Saturday were apparantly back again in the final round.

He missed an 8-foot putt for par and made bogey on No. 1 for a second straight round to drop three shots behind Pettersson. And just like Saturday, Knost fought back with a birdie on the second hole—he made eagle there in the third round—to close in on Pettersson.

However, Knost's chances ended, though, a hole later with a horrible drive out of bounds left on No. 3 that led to a triple-bogey seven and left him five shots behind and out of contention.

When Knost flew his approach to the 12th green way left, he simply stood in the fairway and stared straight ahead, hands on hips, in disbelief.

Pettersson didn't let Knost's troubles affect his focus. "He had a tough time out there," Pettersson said. "But there were still other guys with a chance."

Johnson, four strokes behind Pettersson at the start, tried to make a charge with birdies on the second, fourth and fifth holes. Johnson closed to three shots when he birdied No. 15 and Pettersson had his first bogey of the day moments later.

But Johnson ran out of steam on the 16th hole when he drove into a waste bunker and took bogey. Still, it was Johnson's best showing of the year and first top-10 finish since January.

Donald was largely resigned to surrendering No. 1 when he woke up early for his 9:46 a.m. start time, more than four hours before the final group of Pettersson and Knost teed off.

Donald's round began badly with a double bogey at No. 1. He worked his way back with birdies on the fifth and sixth hole and that's where he stayed. Donald ended a four-week run at No. 1 that began after he won the Transitions Championship last month.

Donald said he's proved he's among the world's best and is confident he'll stay in that conversation, no matter where he's ranked. "Now, my focus is winning tournaments," he said.

Donald headed the list of four golfers among the 20 who followed the Masters with Harbour Town. World No. 13 Webb Simpson finished at 4 over while No. 14 Matt Kuchar, two strokes from the playoff in third at Augusta National, also was way off the pace at 3 over. No. 18 Bill Haas did not make the cut.

Pettersson's last victory came at the RBC Canadian Open in 2010 and this win was likely just popular with first-year Heritage sponsor Royal Bank of Canada. The financial institution, along with the Boeing Co., stepped in last June to back the cash-strapped event which was in danger of disappearing without such support.

Te-Boo! Jets' new backup booed at Yankee Stadium

NEW YORK (AP)—Tim Tebow has work to do if he's going to win over New York sports fans.

The new backup quarterback for the Jets was booed at Yankee Stadium on Sunday night when he was shown on the giant video board—even though he was wearing a Yankees cap.

Sitting in the third row next to the Los Angeles Angels dugout, Tebow cracked a smile and acknowledged the camera. There was a smattering of cheers, but most of the initial reactions were boos.

Tebow was acquired by the New York Jets from Denver in a much-hyped trade last month. He is expected to back up starter Mark Sanchez, even though Tebow rallied the Broncos to the NFL playoffs last season and became a polarizing sensation in the process.

"I didn't get a chance to see him," Yankees manager Joe Girardi said after his team's 11-5 victory. "I would have loved to get a chance to see him and talk to him. I'm sure he'll be back at some point. Obviously he's going to be around a lot more now. But I'd love to visit with him at some point."

Sitting next to Tebow was Miami Heat star Dwyane Wade, also booed when he was shown on the scoreboard earlier in the game. But those boos quickly turned to cheers when Wade held up his Yankees cap.

Wade and the Heat beat the New York Knicks 93-85 Sunday afternoon at Madison Square Garden.

Tigers win 5-2, end White Sox streak

CHICAGO (AP)—Detroit's Gerald Laird homered among his three hits to power the Tigers to a 5-2 win over Chicago on Sunday, ending the White Sox four-game winning streak.

Laird homered to left against Chris Sale (1-1) leading off the third.

His efforts were backed by a strong outing by Rick Porcello (1-0), who was sharp and aggressive, not issuing any walks in 7-2/3 innings.

The White Sox brought the tying run to the plate in the ninth, but Jose Valverde struck out Dayan Viciedo to end the game.

Blue Jays 9, Orioles 2

In Toronto, Edwin Encarnacion hit a two-run homer and Brett Lawrie added a solo shot in Toronto's win over Baltimore.

The Blue Jays used a seven-run sixth inning to avoid what would have been their first three-game sweep by the Orioles in seven years.

Toronto starter Kyle Drabek (2-0) allowed one earned run in 7 1-3 innings, striking out six.

Baltimore's Brian Matusz (0-2) allowed five runs in 5 2-3 innings, extending his winless streak to 11 starts.

Rangers 4, Twins 3

In Minneapolis, Josh Hamilton's two-run homer in the eighth capped a three-run inning that lifted Texas over Minnesota.

Glen Perkins (0-1) walked a batter to start the eighth, and Elvis Andrus followed with an RBI triple to bring the Rangers within one. Then Hamilton hit the first pitch he saw from Perkins into the upper deck above right field.

Robbie Ross (2-0) struck out three in two scoreless innings for his second win in two days, and the Rangers completed their first series sweep in Minnesota in 13 years.

Mariners 5, Athletics 3

In Seattle, Brendan Ryan hit a two-run homer and Justin Smoak added a solo shot as Seattle defeated Oakland.

Smoak snapped a skid of 11 straight at-bats without a hit when he lined a solo homer with two outs in the third off Graham Godfrey (0-2).

Blake Beavan (1-1) threw seven strong innings.

Red Sox 6, Rays 4

In Boston, David Ortiz doubled in the go-ahead run for his seventh consecutive hit as Boston won its third straight game over Tampa Bay.

Mike Aviles hit his second solo homer in two days from the lead-off spot. He moved there when Jacoby Ellsbury was injured.

Vicente Padilla (1-0) pitched 1 2-3 scoreless innings for the win.

Tampa Bay's Matt Moore (0-1) gave up six runs in 6 1-3 innings in only the third regular-season start of his career.

Yankees 11, Angels 5

In New York, Derek Jeter hit a three-run homer to extend his fast start and power New York to victory over Los Angeles.

Jeter also doubled during a four-run rally to help the Yankees take two of three in an early series between high-priced teams expected to challenge for the American League pennant.

New York starter Ivan Nova (2-0) struck out eight over six innings to win his 14th straight decision.

Angels starter Jerome Williams (0-1) made his season debut and was gone in the third inning.

Indians 13, Royals 7

In Kansas City, Travis Hafner hit one of the longest home runs in Kauffman Stadium history to highlight Cleveland's win over Kansas City which completed a three-game sweep.

Shelly Duncan also homered and drove in three runs for the Indians, who were so dominant that the Royals had to resort to using outfielder Mitch Maier as a pitcher in the ninth.

Ubaldo Jimenez (1-0) was back from a five-game suspension and took the win despite conceding nine hits and three walks in five innings.

Kansas City starter Luis Mendoza (0-2) was pulled after four-plus innings, permitting nine runs and four walks.

Dodgers 5, Padres 4

In Los Angeles, the Los Angeles Dodgers turned a bizarre triple play in the top of the ninth inning as they beat the San Diego Padres, completing a three game sweep.

It was 4-4 when the Dodgers turned their first triple play in 15 years.

San Diego's Chris Denorfia led off with a single against Javy Guerra (1-0) and Chase Headley walked. With two men on base, Jesus Guzman then squared to bunt, but the high, tight pitch hit his bat as he backed away.

The ball landed fair in front of the plate and the catcher picked it up and threw to third for the out. The third baseman threw to second for the second out, and the ball was relayed to first where Guzman was out because he had been stunned by the pitch and hadn't run to the base.

In the bottom of the inning, Dee Gordon singled home the winning run.

Brad Brach (0-1) was the loser for the Padres, who have lost four straight.

Reds 8, Nationals 5, 11 innings

In Washington, Joey Votto hit a two-run double in the 11th inning to lift Cincinnati to victory, avoiding a four-game sweep by Washington.

The Reds, who had scored just 10 runs in losing five of six, scored their most runs in a game this season.

Drew Stubbs, who had been 1 for 15 in the series, singled off Tyler Clippard (1-1) to open the 11th. After an unsuccessful bunt, Zack Cozart singled and Votto doubled to left. Scott Rolen followed with an RBI single.

Jose Arrendondo (1-0) threw a scoreless 10th for the win. Sean Marshall worked the 11th for his first save of the season.

Phillies 8, Mets 2

In Philadelphia, Cole Hamels pitched seven strong innings to lead Philadelphia past New York.

Hamels (1-1) struck out 10. It was the 19th double-digit strikeout game of his career.

Ty Wigginton drove in four runs for the Phillies, who scored twice in the seventh inning against Mets reliever Ramon Ramirez (1-1). The Phillies blew the game open with five unearned runs in the eighth off two Mets relievers.

Cardinals 10, Cubs 3

In St. Louis, Jake Westbrook allowed one earned run in seven strong innings to steer St. Louis past Chicago.

Westbrook (2-0) pounded his sinker for 12 groundball outs.

Rookie Matt Carpenter homered, tripled and drove in five runs for the Cardinals. Filling in for the injured Lance Berkman, Carpenter is batting .409 with 10 RBIs in 22 at-bats.

Cubs starter Paul Maholm (0-2) surrendered six runs in four innings.

Diamondbacks 5, Rockies 2

In Denver, Trevor Cahill earned his first win with Arizona, pitching the visitors past Colorado.

Acquired from Oakland in the offseason, Cahill (1-0) held the Rockies to four singles in 7 1-3 innings.

Chris Young homered and drove in three runs as the Diamondbacks avoided a series sweep.

Colorado's Drew Pomeranz, making his first start of the season, lasted only 4 1-3 innings and threw 100 pitches.

Braves 7, Brewers 4

In Atlanta, Chipper Jones hit a three-run homer in his return after missing two games, lifting Atlanta above Milwaukee.

Brandon Beachy (1-1) pitched seven strong innings, giving up only one unearned run for the Braves, who have won five straight after losing their first four.

Chris Narveson (1-1) gave up five runs in four innings for the Brewers, who have lost four straight.

Marlins 5, Astros 4, 11 innings

In Miami, Omar Infante and Hanley Ramirez hit Miami's first homers in its new ballpark, activating the much-discussed gaudy home run sculpture and beating Houston in 11 innings.

Ramirez tied the game in the eighth with a two-run homer, then singled home the winning run with one out in the 11th.

It was the last of five games without suspended manager Ozzie Guillen. The Marlins went 2-3 in that spell.

David Carpenter (0-1) was the loser.

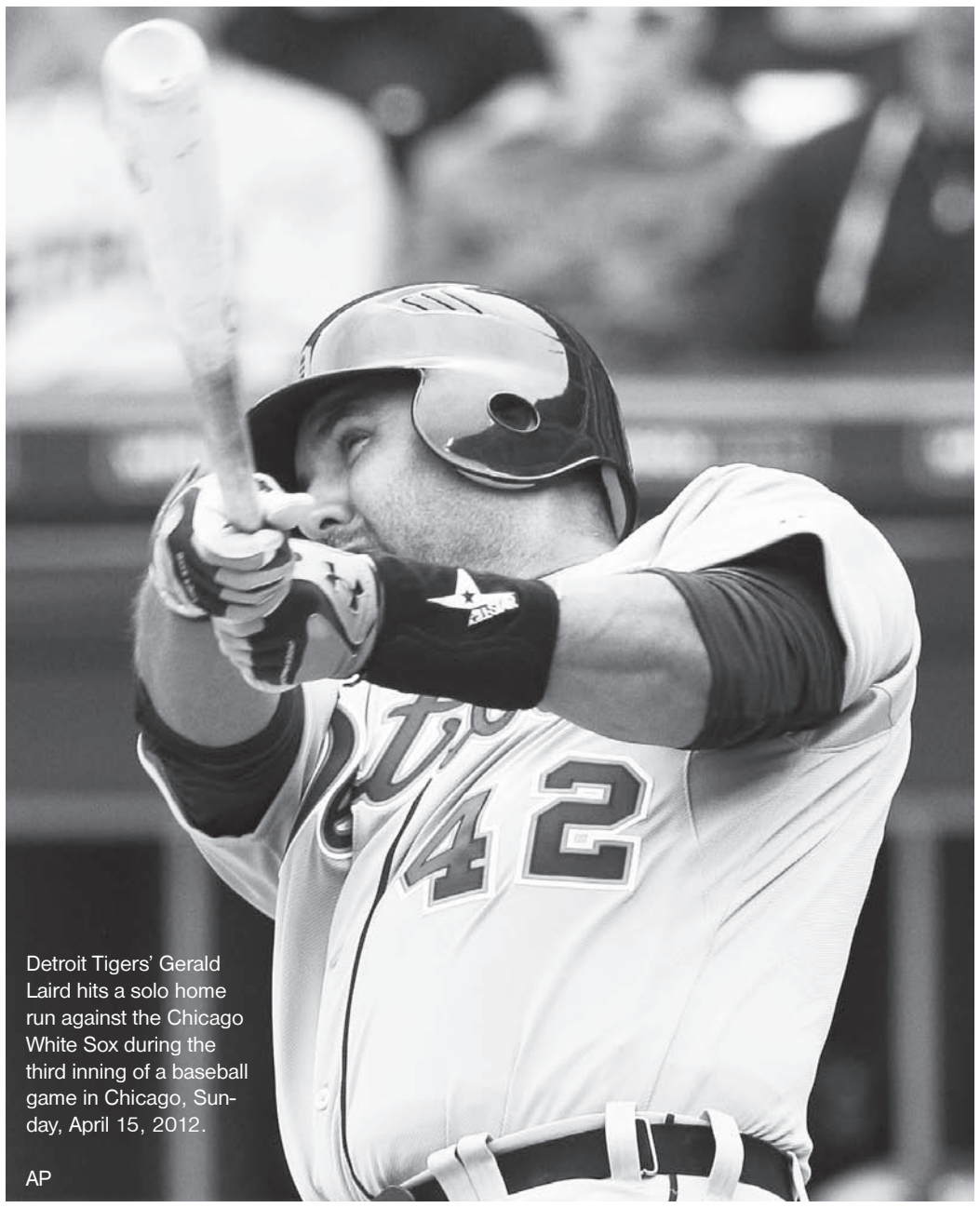
The Astros loaded the bases with two outs in the 11th, but failed to score against Chad Gaudin (1-0).

Pirates 4, Giants 1

In San Francisco, Pittsburgh ended a five-game skid by beating San Francisco.

Kevin Correia (1-0) gave up only one run in six innings.

Garrett Jones hit his first homer of the season off Ryan Vogelsong (0-1).



Detroit Tigers' Gerald Laird hits a solo home run against the Chicago White Sox during the third inning of a baseball game in Chicago, Sunday, April 15, 2012.

AP

MLB *honors Jackie Robinson with ballpark tributes*

NEW YORK (AP)—LaTroy Hawkins has heard the stories from his 87-year-old grandfather, about his days of picking cotton in Mississippi, about the times when there were no black players in big league baseball.

And about what it meant when Jackie Robinson broke the game's color barrier.

"Without Jackie, I wouldn't be in front of you," the Los Angeles Angels pitcher told several dozen kids at a Bronx ballfield Sunday. "Jackie's role in my life has been tremendous."

From Dodger Stadium to Fenway Park, there were ceremonies as Major League Baseball honored Robinson and his legacy. Video tributes and on-field celebrations at every ballpark included his family, his former teammates, players from the Negro Leagues and NBA great Bill Russell.

Players, managers, coaches and umpires all wore No. 42 on Jackie Robinson Day to remember the 65th anniversary of the day the future Hall of Famer first took the field with the Brooklyn Dodgers in 1947. Markers on each base noted the occasion.

"I'm very happy the players feel that connected," said his daughter, Sharon Robinson. "Back in 1997, players were saying, `Jackie who?' So we've come a long way."

Hall of Famer Reggie Jackson, Hawkins and several former players joined Sharon Robinson at a youth clinic in a park where the old Yankee Stadium stood. Smiling boys and girls from the Reviving Baseball in Inner Cities program in Harlem eagerly showed off their gloves and jerseys for two-time All-Star Harold Reynolds.

There was a pregame tribute at the new Yankee Stadium on Sunday night featuring Rachel Robinson, Jackie's wife, and Sharon before the Angels played New York. Yankees stars Derek Jeter and Robinson Cano—who is named for the baseball pioneer—hugged the Robinsons as they gathered with three Tuskegee Airmen behind home plate.

Yankees center fielder Curtis Granderson wore customized spikes with the Jackie Robinson Day logo on the back and No. 42 on the tongue. The shoes will be auctioned off later, with proceeds going to the Jackie Robinson Foundation.

On a shelf in his locker, Granderson had a small figurine of Robinson sliding feet-first in his Brooklyn uniform. He pointed out that Robinson's success provided opportunities for so many in baseball, not only blacks.

"It opened up doors for everybody. I think that's the one thing he would be proud of," Granderson said. "You just look at the diversity, all of which started with Jackie Robinson 65 years ago."

Granderson's teammate, Mariano Rivera, is the only active player still wearing No. 42. The number was retired by MLB 15 years ago on the 50th anniversary of Robinson's debut.

"I think it's a great thing for baseball. I think it's a great thing for life in general, continuing to promote his legacy," Granderson said. "I don't think it's been forgotten, by the number of kids that are coming up to me saying, `Hey, my first book report was on Jackie Robinson.' These are 6, 7, 8, 9-year-olds that are doing it."

Voyagers, Fotten Palau's foes closing in

Jonny's Bar & Grill's IT&E Voyagers and Joe's Steakhouse's Fotten Palau remain atop the Agingan and Obyan divisions of the Budweiser Open 8-Ball League, but their opponents are slowly catching up after last week's games.

The IT&E Voyagers went into Wild Bill's Bar & Grill and downed Shark Attack, 12-5, in an inter-league game and improved to a 119-34 record. However, the IT&E Voyagers are just one game ahead of Poseidon's Docomo Pacific Home Boyz, which routed Joe's Ocean Warriors, 13-4, at home to move closer to the division leader.

In other results, the IT&E Incredibles defeated Fotten Palau (79-74), 10-7, on the road at Joe's, and New Saipan Aluminum's Hustlers steamrolled in to third place with a 16-1 inter-league road win over Bammy's Restaurant & Bar's Boom Boom (37-116).

Obyan leader, Fotten Palau, leads Jonny's Crazy 8 (76-77) by just three games after the latter creamed The Water Front's self title squad (38-115), 13-4, on the road.

Then the third-ranked 19th Hole Bar's Titans (75-78) traveled to Jonny's and bumped off fourth place Team SCS (72-81), 9-8, while Poseidon's Yang-Ku (66-87) defeated 19th Hole's Poksu (54-99), 12-5, in a road match. ***(Walter Cepeda Sutherland)***

MAJOR

From Page 28

(7-4), and Natibu Sports Association's Tanapag the Falcons (6-3) in the eight-team playoffs.

In addition, on Saturday the Rays narrowly escaped IT&E (4-7), 6-4, and the Legals (4-6) defeated McDonald's (1-10), 12-5. The Falcons (6-3), meanwhile, barely glided past the San Vicente A's (4-7), 5-4, on Sunday.

Comets 9, Enforcers 3

Enforcers' Joaquin Saralu broke a 2-2 tie from the first two innings with a base hit and some crafty base running in the top half of the third frame.

The Comets threatened in the bottom half, but left runners on the corners.

Fortunately for them, their pitcher Erik Cruz hung tough on the mound and struck out the side in the third inning to give his team a chance for a late rally.

After going 1-2-3 to end the fourth, the Comets exploded with seven runs off five hits.

Vincent Thomas doubled on and made home with a fielder's choice by Cruz and another run scored soon after off an error. Cruz was doubled in by Lorenzo Sebaklim and Austin Hocog kept it rolling, despite a pitching change, with an RBI single.

Then after a walk, Aurel Mendiola stepped in and cleared the bases with a three-run bomb.

Comets' Cruz held it down on the mound in his biggest start of the season and finished the game, giving up three runs off just two hits with 12 strikeouts in six innings.

Falcons 5, A's 4

The Falcons moved in front, 2-0, off two hits and an infield error in the third inning. Benen Iguel bagged an RBI double.

Notably, Falcons workhorse pitcher Jose Pangelinan held the A's on a short leash for five innings and allowed only three base runners from that point in the match.

He stepped back on the rubber in the top of the sixth inning, but left shortly after with one out and runners on first and second. The Falcons immediately nabbed its second out after the change, but the A's grinded out a four-run rally for new life off an error, a stolen dish by Donavin Ada, and an RBI single by Ryuta Onuki before the Falcons could put a lid on it.

The Falcons then screeched back in the bottom frame with a two-out uprising of its own to steal the win. Don Fejaren led off with a triple and stole home and after sitting down the next two batters, the A's fell apart at the most inopportune time.

A pair of errors preset three consecutive walks as perhaps the Falcons were gifted the win in the clutch.

It was justice regardless for winning pitcher Pangelinan who maintained a 2-0 margin before leaving the game. He inherited an unearned run off four hits and three walks with six strikeouts through 5 2/3 innings.

Ol' Aces 8, Enforcers 7

The Enforcers shot out of the gate with three doubles for a 3-0 lead in the first inning. Jim-Boy Laniyo, Joaquin Saralu, and Kier Agda all bagged RBIs.

Ol'Aces were silent its first time through the lineup, but came alive with seven runs off five hits in the third inning.

Tyler Flores lit the wick with a two-RBI single and Virgil Secharmidal kept the run alive with a solo blast.

Ol'Aces then loaded the bases and scored off a fielder's choice, a walk, and a trio of RBI base rips by Kaluki Aguon, Jerome Reyes, and Mathew Higgins.

The Enforcers mustered a run in the fourth inning from a stolen dish by Travis Camacho and then added two more in the fifth off a two-run shot by Agda before tying the match at 7-all thanks to a wild throw around the infield in the sixth frame. Dennis Cabrera reached on a one-out single and made his way around to force the game into overtime.

Ol'Aces' Secharmidal led off the bonus frame with a base hit and was knocked home off a fielder's choice by Tyrese Camacho for the go-ahead run and Reyes secured the save in the bottom frame.

Ol'Aces starting pitcher Secharmidal received the nod after giving up five earned runs off seven hits two walks and a pair of hit batsmen with nine strikeouts through five innings.

Rays 6, IT&E 4

It was a pitching duel between Rays' Jay Kalen and IT&E lefty Matt Kapileo, but the Rays' Nathaniel Torres reached on a base hit and later scored off a wild pitch to break the ice in the fourth inning.

IT&E answered with four runs in the fifth inning for a promising surge. Elijah Villar then tripled home Jae Hae Lee and stole home, while the other runs came in off an error and a fielder's choice by Alan Hinson.

Though Rays' Kalen blinked first on the mound, IT&E did not want to risk it and relieved Kapileo with Colin Ramsey in the bottom of the fifth.

The Rays were happy to see the former go and racked up five runs off three hits with patience at the plate to steal the win.

Brian Wabol and Kalen reached and stole home to pull the Rays within a run and a pair of walks costly walks set up a clutch two-RBI double by Ramnes Karben. He also scored himself off an error.

Stunned by the Rays' late sneak attack, IT&E could not muster two runs to extend it into extra innings.

Little Legals 12, McDonald's 5

The Little Legals worked out an early 3-1 lead in the opening frame off three hits. Jeff Castro led off with a hit and made it around, Mark Manahane smashed an RBI triple, and Quinton Deleon Guerrero an RBI single.

The Legals then added two more runs in the second off an RBI rip by Joe Camacho and a passed ball, but McDonald's got a run back in the bottom frame from an RBI single by Anthony Fruit.

Then the Legals' Vincent Ogo stole home in the third inning for a 6-2 edge and some pitching woes for McDonald's contributed to a five-run tear by the Legals in the fourth.

McDonald's managed to bring around two runs in the top of the fifth inning, but was not able to climb out of the hole.

The Legals drew 13 bases on balls in the game to compliment its seven hits.

SAIPAN

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to all the clubs and also all the schools in the CNMI," Tan said.

"We decided to go ahead with the donation presentation without the soccer balls while the youth league is ongoing. We may distribute the balls next month when the youth league is scheduled to finish and these balls can be used to prepare the players for the fall season and in scrimmages/clinics during the school vacation," Tan added.

Present to receive the donation for MP United were U18 coach Brad Ruszala and club official Vickie Izuka.

"There is no coach who does not love to use cones for practices. This set of equipment will definitely help us in training our youth players," said Ruszala, who uses cones and discs as line markers during practices.

"We would like to thank Saipan Soccer School for giving us the necessary tools to improve our players' skills and helping the clubs become better," Ruszala added.

Paire coach Patricia Coleman also expressed the club's appreciation for the donation.

"On behalf of Paire, we would like to thank the Saipan Soccer School for their donation and for all their assistance in the development of the sport here, particularly the youth football development. We are grateful to the school for allowing us to use the facility at the TSL Complex and for bringing the Chelsea coaches and helping our youth players," Coleman said.

The Paire official is talking about the different Chelsea FC Soccer School (Hong Kong) coaches who started arriving on Saipan since the school was formed in June last year to help boost the sport here. Right now, there are two coaches on loan from Chelsea and are assisting the CNMI youth teams and providing help to various clubs. They are Jimmy Tang and Cui Jun Jie, who were also present during the donation ceremony, along with Saipan Soccer School staff members Ruselle Zapanta, Jersh Angeles, and Angie Ito.

Joining Coleman, Ruszala, and Izuka in accepting the donation were Matansa vice president Glenn Perez, general secretary Joven Cruz, and treasurer Elna Curate, Tan Holdings FC president Eli Arago, and Shirley's FC's Benjielyn Del Rosario.

"Our kids from Tanapag and the northern side of the island will truly appreciate the donation. They don't have to come to the fields in the southern part of the island to play and practice, as we have enough equipment to use in our own pitches," Perez said. "Through this donation, we could cater to more youth and encourage them to join the sport."

FIFTH

From Page 28

Cajigan claimed the men's 4.0 singles crown after sweeping Chang Whan Jang in the finals, 6-3, 6-2. Jang made it to the semis after downing Gary Ramsey, 4-6, 6-2, 6-2, while Cajigan defeated Carl Dela Cruz in the other semis duel, 6-2, 6-1.

In the men's 3.0 singles, Roligat won the battle among PIC staff members, as he triumphed over Glenn Policare in the semis, 8-0, and versus Dennis Tababa in the finals, 8-3. Tababa marched into the finals after an 8-4 win over Keoni Ichihara.

In the round-robin women's 3.0, Taniguchi thwarted both Malika Miyawaki, 6-0, 6-0, and Emily Jones, 6-3, 6-0, to clinch the championship.

TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES

NBA STANDINGS

EASTERN CONFERENCE

Atlantic Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
x-Boston	36	25	.590	–
Philadelphia	31	28	.525	4
New York	31	29	.517	4 1/2
New Jersey	22	39	.361	14
Toronto	22	39	.361	14

Southeast Division

y-Miami	42	17	.712	–
x-Atlanta	35	25	.583	7 1/2
x-Orlando	35	25	.583	7 1/2
Washington	14	46	.233	28 1/2
Charlotte	7	52	.119	35

Central Division

y-Chicago	46	14	.767	–
x-Indiana	38	22	.633	8
Milwaukee	29	31	.483	17
Detroit	22	38	.367	24
Cleveland	20	39	.339	25 1/2

WESTERN CONFERENCE

Southwest Division

y-San Antonio	42	16	.724	–
Memphis	35	25	.583	8
Dallas	34	27	.557	9 1/2
Houston	32	28	.533	11
New Orleans	18	42	.300	25

Northwest Division

y-Oklahoma City	44	16	.733	–
Denver	33	27	.550	11
Utah	31	30	.508	13 1/2
Portland	28	33	.459	16 1/2
Minnesota	25	36	.410	19 1/2

Pacific Division

x-L.A. Lakers	39	22	.639	–
L.A. Clippers	37	23	.617	1 1/2
Golden State	22	37	.373	16
Sacramento	20	41	.328	19
Phoenix	31	29	.517	7 1/2

x-clinched playoff spot
y-clinched division

MLB STANDINGS

AMERICAN LEAGUE

East Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Baltimore	5	4	.556	–
New York	5	4	.556	–
Toronto	5	4	.556	–
Boston	4	5	.444	1
Tampa Bay	4	5	.444	1

Central Division

Detroit	6	3	.667	–
Chicago	5	3	.625	1/2
Cleveland	4	4	.500	1 1/2
Kansas City	3	6	.333	3
Minnesota	2	7	.222	4

West Division

Texas	8	2	.800	–
Seattle	6	5	.545	2 1/2
Oakland	4	6	.400	4
Los Angeles	3	6	.333	4 1/2

NATIONAL LEAGUE

East Division

Washington	7	3	.700	–
New York	6	3	.667	1/2
Atlanta	5	4	.556	1 1/2
Philadelphia	4	5	.444	2 1/2
Miami	4	6	.400	3

Central Division

St. Louis	7	3	.700	–
Houston	4	5	.444	2 1/2
Cincinnati	4	6	.400	3
Milwaukee	4	6	.400	3
Pittsburgh	3	6	.333	3 1/2
Chicago	3	7	.300	4

West Division

Los Angeles	9	1	.900	–
Arizona	6	3	.667	2 1/2
Colorado	4	5	.444	4 1/2
San Francisco	4	5	.444	4 1/2
San Diego	2	8	.200	7

RBC HERITAGE SCORES

HILTON HEAD ISLAND, South Carolina (AP)—Scores Sunday from the $5.7 million RBC Heritage tournament at the 7,101-yard, par-71 course at the Harbour Town Golf Links:

FINAL ROUND

Carl Pettersson (500), $1,026,000	70-65-66-69—270
Zach Johnson (300), $615,600	71-68-66-70—275
Colt Knost (190), $387,600	67-66-69-74—276
Billy Mayfair (123), $250,800	72-70-67-69—278
Kevin Stadler (123), $250,800	72-71-67-68—278
Matt Bettencourt (95), $198,075	73-69-68-69—279
Boo Weekley (95), $198,075	70-66-70-73—279
Harris English (75), $153,900	68-68-73-71—280
Matt Every (75), $153,900	68-72-73-67—280
Jim Furyk (75), $153,900	68-75-67-70—280
Charley Hoffman (75), $153,900	74-65-71-70—280
Kevin Na (75), $153,900	70-68-69-73—280
Mark Anderson (57), $106,875	73-71-69-68—281
Brian Davis (57), $106,875	72-68-68-73—281
Robert Garrigus (57), $106,875	71-66-70-74—281
Vaughn Taylor (57), $106,875	67-73-70-71—281
Rory Sabbatini (53), $85,500	70-72-68-72—282
Brandt Snedeker (53), $85,500	71-67-69-75—282
Kevin Streelman (53), $85,500	74-68-70-70—282
Greg Chalmers (50), $66,405	71-69-73-70—283
D.A. Points (50), $66,405	74-68-71-70—283
John Rollins (50), $66,405	70-72-70-71—283
Michael Thompson (50), $66,405	71-70-70-72—283
Cameron Beckman (45), $47,310	73-71-66-74—284
Chad Campbell (45), $47,310	67-70-72-75—284
Jason Dufner (45), $47,310	78-66-67-73—284
Bob Estes (45), $47,310	71-67-75-71—284
Mark Wilson (45), $47,310	73-72-68-71—284
Stephen Ames (39), $34,699	71-74-66-74—285
Kevin Chappell (39), $34,699	70-72-73-70—285
Brendon de Jonge (39), $34,699	72-70-71-72—285
Charles Howell III (39), $34,699	72-68-77-68—285
Trevor Immelman (39), $34,699	71-71-71-72—285
Lee Janzen (39), $34,699	71-70-73-71—285
Jerry Kelly (39), $34,699	72-69-72-72—285
Geoff Ogilvy (39), $34,699	74-67-74-70—285
Bud Cauley (31), $24,510	71-68-74-73—286
Tim Clark (31), $24,510	73-67-72-74—286
Luke Donald (31), $24,510	75-69-71-71—286
J.J. Henry (31), $24,510	72-70-72-72—286
Spencer Levin (31), $24,510	73-72-71-70—286
John Mallinger (31), $24,510	69-72-73-72—286
Heath Slocum (31), $24,510	71-71-70-74—286
Jason Bohn (24), $16,473	70-71-69-77—287
Michael Bradley (24), $16,473	74-64-71-78—287
Gary Christian (24), $16,473	71-68-76-72—287
Graham DeLaet (24), $16,473	74-68-73-72—287
Tom Gillis (24), $16,473	70-71-74-72—287
Matt Kuchar (24), $16,473	72-69-69-77—287
Marc Leishman (24), $16,473	71-71-70-75—287
Jeff Maggert (24), $16,473	74-71-69-73—287
John Daly (18), $13,367	70-74-68-76—288
Tommy Gainey (18), $13,367	70-70-68-80—288
Webb Simpson (18), $13,367	71-74-70-73—288
Charlie Wi (18), $13,367	68-73-73-74—288
Stuart Appleby (14), $12,825	73-69-71-76—289
James Driscoll (14), $12,825	72-72-75-70—289
Hunter Haas (14), $12,825	71-74-67-77—289
Chez Reavie (14), $12,825	69-71-70-79—289
Will Claxton (10), $12,369	70-72-73-75—290
Ken Duke (10), $12,369	72-72-73-73—290
Shaun Micheel (10), $12,369	72-73-76-69—290
Kyle Stanley (10), $12,369	71-72-75-72—290
Joe Durant (7), $12,027	70-71-77-73—291
Nick O'Hern (7), $12,027	74-69-78-70—291
Briny Baird (5), $11,856	74-69-71-78—292
Fredrik Jacobson (4), $11,742	71-67-74-81—293
Sean O'Hair (3), $11,628	73-69-79-73—294
Lucas Glover (2), $11,514	72-72-74-78—296
Brian Harman (1), $11,343	71-70-74-82—297
Rocco Mediate (1), $11,343	73-71-74-79—297

BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

36 COMPLETE

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Besides the 2.5-km race, last Sunday's competitions also featured three other events—600 meter, 1km, and 1.3km.

The 1.3-km race drew the most participants with 16 and another SSC bet, Kento Akimaru, recorded the fastest time in the second longest race of the day. The 11-year-old Akimaru finished the race in 19:46.70 to beat teammates David Boyer (25:30.34) and Genel Christian Villacrusis (28:57.96) in the boys 11 to 12 division.

Other finishers in the 1.3-km race were Manukai's Danielle Atoigue (24:53.04) and Kate Lee McCormic (25:36.85), World Resort's Charlie Min (24:54.50), Jayson Camacho (27:28.65), Amrit Limbu (26:03.45), Jerryson Mani (30:28.64), Vener Urena (22:22.49), and Fernando Java (26:11.36), SSC Masters' Eileen Escudero Wisor (27:31.65) and Suzy Kindel (25:50.95), and Saipan's Ty Izuka (30:54.76), Nicky Nichols (24:27.85), and Manny Sitchon (27:23.37).

In the boys 9 to 10 1-km race, seven SSC swimmers slug it out for the top honors with Lennosuke Suzuki winning with his time of 18:33.12. Suzuki outsprinted Taiga Sato to the finish line, as the latter settled for second place with his time of 18:33.86. Michael Villagomez completed the Top 3 after tallying 20:55.55 and was followed by Naoki Kasai (20:08.06), Rinto Takahashi (20:09.42), Michail Villagomez (23:09.68), and R.J. Pierce (26:52.44).

In the 600m race, Conatsu Kaga defeated younger sister, Coume, in the girls U8 race after the former logged 17:39.83 against the latter's 25:39.71. In the boys U8 division, Miku Torres edged Taiyo Akimaru in a down-to-the-wire finish. Torres clocked in at 16:00.15 against Akimaru's 16:00.21. Akira Kadokura and Jinnosuke Suzuki came in at third and fourth with their times of 16:13.65 and 16:28.57, respectively.

Last Sunday's ocean swim capped SSC's three-day competitions over the weekend. Last Friday and Saturday, the oldest swim club on Saipan held a tournament at the Kan Pacific Swimming Pool with the hosts racing against Tsunami Saipan bets and swimmers from Guam's Manukai Athletic Club and the Andersen Marlins of the Andersen Air Force Base. Results of the swim meet will be released later this week.

12th Annual PIC Tennis Championships

PHOTOS By ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Mikayla Lopez goes for a backhand return.

Kinumi Taniguchi makes a baseline return to Emily Jones during their women's 3.0 singles match in the 12th Annual PIC Tennis Championships last Saturday at the Pacific Islands Club hard court.

Tim Quan bends to hit a low ball from the baseline.

Gary Ramsey returns to Chang Whan Jang during their men's 4.0 singles semis game.

Tim Quan, left, and Mikayla Lopez exchange hi-fives after scoring a point against Bobby Cruz and Thea Minor in the mixed open doubles finals.

Isabel Heras returns to Dylan Ackerman and Carol Lee, while teammate Luther Lizama stays at the baseline.

Dylan Ackerman makes a return during his and Carol Lee's junior doubles game against Luther Lizama and Isabel Heras.

Chang Whan Jang prepares to serve against Chris Cajigan during their men's 4.0 singles title game.

Emily Jones gets ready to serve against Kinumi Taniguchi.

Bobby Cruz makes a backhand return.

Lakers beat Mavericks without Bryant

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Saipan Tribune
Sports

Tigers win 5-2, end White Sox streak

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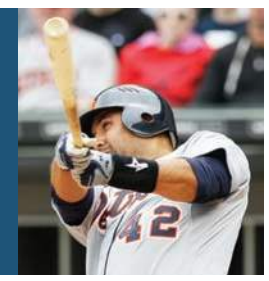

Fifth in a row for Thea

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Junior player Thea Minor recorded the longest winning streak in the history of the PIC Tennis Championships after notching her fifth straight women's open singles crown in the 12th edition of the annual competition last weekend.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Thea Minor goes for a volley during her and Bobby Cruz's title game against Tim Quan and Mikayla Lopez in the mixed open doubles division of the PIC tournament last Saturday at the PIC hard courts in San Antonio.

Minor, who started her run in the women's open singles in 2008, extended her reign in the division, following a straight sets win over fellow junior player Mikayla Lopez in last Saturday's finals, 6-4, 6-3. Minor also defeated Lopez in last year's finale, 6-2, 6-0; downed Lydia Tan in 2010, 6-0, 6-0; topped Jodel Fernandez in 2009, 6-1, 6-1, and again triumphed over Fernandez and Matty Buenaventura in the round-robin event in 2008.

In the men's open, Todd Montgomery won the championship he last claimed in 2005 after surviving Bobby Cruz in Sunday's finale, 7-5, 2-6, 6-3. Montgomery, who won over Faheem Ebrahim in 2005, missed the next six editions of the PIC tournament, leaving former junior player Ji Hoon Heo the chance to rule the men's open field. Heo prevailed in the men's open for four straight years (2007-2010), while former Fiesta Resort and Spa Saipan instructor Peter Loyola and CNMI coach Jeff Race won in 2006 and 2011, respectively.

Montgomery, who also took the men's doubles crown, teaming up with Tim Quan in beating Christian Mille and Cruz, was seeded first in the men's open singles and drew a bye in the first round.

The eventual men's open champion then first played last Saturday against junior netter Rafael Jones and won, 6-1, 6-3. Jones earned the right to face Montgomery in the semis after slipping past Russel Buenaventura last Friday, 6-1, 5-7, 6-1.

In other first round matches, Cruz eliminated Vivian Lee, 6-3, 6-0, to arrange a semis tiff against Quan, who also ousted Dong Min Lee, 6-3, 6-1. Cruz went on to advanced to the finals after beating Quan, 6-3, 6-4.

Two more men's singles and one women's events were played over the weekend with Chris Cajigan, Darrel Roligat, and Kinumi Taniguchi topping their respective fields.

See **FIFTH** on **Page 26**

The race is on in Major Division

By WALTER CEPEDA SUTHERLAND
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REPORTER

The Dandan Comets improved its perfect win-loss record to 10-0 after downing DPS Dare Program's Enforcers (8-3), 9-3, in Sunday's Saipan Little League's Major Division matchup held at the Miguel "Tan Ge" Basa Pangelinan Ballfield.

The Enforcers came into this weekend positioned strongly in second place, but now have some company in the standings after enduring not one, but two losses.

On Saturday the IT&E Ol' Aces (8-3) outlasted Enforcers, 8-7, in seven innings and is now tied for second place.

This weekend left San Vicente A's (4-7), IT&E (4-7), the Attorney Robert T. Torres' Kagman Little Legals (4-6), and the As Matuis Twins (5-5) racing to see who will join the Comets, Enforcers, Ol'Aces, Pacific Amusements' Rays

WALTER CEPEDA SUTHERLAND

Rays' third baseman Nathaniel Torres fires a fielded bunt over to first base in Saturday's Major Division matchup against IT&E at the Miguel "Tan Ge" Basa Pangelinan Ballfield.

See **MAJOR** on **Page 26**

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Participants in last Sunday's 34th Annual Saipan Swim Club Ocean Swim pose for a group photo while waiting for the start of race in the waters off Saipan World Resort.

Saipan Soccer School donates equipment

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Saipan Soccer School turned over a set of equipment to five football clubs last week to help in the grassroots development of the sport in the CNMI.

Jerry Tan, SSS president, led the presentation of donation to the representatives of Matansa Football Club, MP United FC, Paire Football Club, Tan Holdings FC, and Shirley's FC in a brief ceremony last Friday at the lobby of the Saipan Grand Hotel. Tan handed each club official 10 pieces of small cones, eight big ones, and 48 colorful discs.

"This is just the first part of Saipan Soccer School's donation. We will also be donating balls

See **SAIPAN** on **Page 26**

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Saipan Soccer School officials and staff members pose with the representatives of the various local football clubs during the donation turnover ceremony of football equipment last Friday at the lobby of the Saipan Grand Hotel.

36 complete SSC ocean swim

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

The 34th Annual Saipan Swim Club Ocean Swim drew 36 participants with the host's Victoria Chentsova leading the finishers of the Sunday race in the waters off the Saipan World Resort.

Chentsova completed the 2.5-kilometer swim in 37 minutes 58.62 seconds to top the girls 13 to 14 age group and beat five other swimmers who joined the longest race of the day. The SSC swimmer finished ahead of Tsunami Saipan's Angel Marie Tan (38:26.09) and Manukai Athletic Club (Guam)'s Taloani Atoigue (50:50.68).

Saipan's Jeff El-Hajj was the second overall finisher in the 2.5-km race and won the men's 20 to 29 age group with his 39:55.93, while SSC Masters' Carol Lynn Calobong-Pierce submitted 45:50.07 to claim top honors in the 50 to 59 age group. Manukai's Hee Jung Kang also joined the 2.5-kilometer event and posted 50:59.54 in the girls 15 to 19 age group.

See **36 COMPLETE** on **Page 26**